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(The) School of the Church:

Its Pre-eminent Place and Purpose

James Marion
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Secretary of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Teachers shall shine with the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12:3.

Church School Title

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To my daughter

MARGARET ANN FROST

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THE PREFATORY VIEWPOINT.

THIS book was written in recognition and under the impulse of the greatness and glory of Sunday school teaching. It holds in contemplation some of the mightiest things of the kingdom and counts this school pre-eminent in the educational system.

Remarkable indeed has been the improvement in Sunday school method and organization, in equipment and management. But while the school has become powerful in organic life and outreach of efficiency, its mission remains unchanged, though the perspective is larger and its energies move with statelier and more commanding sweep.

Its text-book, its purpose and aim, its glorious course of instruction in revealed truth and redemptive grace—these remain unchanged through the changing years. The open Bible and the uplift of the cross must hold with increasing emphasis the center of Sunday school life and effort, of efficiency and conquest.

To that end in such measure as this volume may carry, the author makes his contribution for culture in the things of Christ—culture in his saving grace and service, in his doctrine and spirit, in the personal likeness of his character and for the triumph of his kingdom.

Nashville, Tenn.

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THE OUTLOOK ON THE AGES.

LOOKING at the Sunday school teacher's sphere and mission in these various aspects, it is evident that the work which a Sunday school teacher is summoned to undertake, has a basis as permanent as the plan of God for the welfare of the human race, and involves interests vast and limitless as eternity itself. The responsibilities of such a work are infinite, and they cannot be evaded by a refusal to accept them. For the scholars whom a teacher has in his charge, and for the scholars whom any individual Christian ought to have in his charge, that teacher and that individual Christian are responsible to God. The evidences of that responsibility, and the manner of its discharge, will be disclosed before the universe. In the thought of this truth every teacher ought to live, ought to work, ought to pray, and ought to trust.—*H. Clay Trumbull in Teaching and Teachers.*

CHAPTER I.

A THREEFOLD CHURCH RELATION.

ITS RELATION TO THE CHURCH. The Sunday school of today is a school—a gathering for instruction. It has all the elements of a school, with some elements which make it distinct in character, unique in purpose, method and curriculum. It is in the church, of the church, and for the church—a church school in every true and commanding sense. It has a threefold relation to the church, being a church *institution,* and when in operation, a church *service* and *agency.* It is a mighty instrument for bringing things to pass in the kingdom of God, but gets its life, power and directing energy in the church, in the very structure and efficiency of which it forms an organic part.

The question of the Sunday school's relation to the church was a subject of much discussion forty years ago. It held chief place on the programs of Conventions, and provoked oftentimes earnest contention and even conflict, but always without satisfactory settlement. That question, though not of easy categorical answer, has been settled, not however by discussion, but through wonderful development of spiritual forces and by what may be called the natural adjustment of spiritual agencies making for the building of the kingdom. As an institution the Sunday school has the

fostering care of the church, and when assembled is the teaching agency of the church, but so seasoned by prayer and song and lofty spirit, as to make it a service of worship in the church of God. And so it has come to a conspicuous and commanding place, and its influence for good girdles the world.

The History of its Growth. The Sunday school as an institution has come through the growth of years, more than a century now, and its history may be traced through the lives of illustrious men, who wrought each his part and passed it on to those who came after. It has a remarkable record, having come to its place by slow degrees, and oftentime encountering grave difficulties and even severe oppositions. And yet in this respect it has fared perhaps as well as the week-day school. The present object, however, is not to write its history, for that would require a volume within itself, but simply to emphasize its record from what it was to what it is, and how from the smallest beginning, like the mountain stream that grows into the river, it has become one of the mightiest institutions in the world. It won its way and came to its triumph because of what it could do, as a propaganda of New Testament principles, and in the way of saving the young. It made the church more efficient in its mission among men for the honor of Christ as its head and King, and for his glory as the Saviour of sinners.

Robert Raikes and William Fox. The Sunday school was not of the church at first, but had its rise apart and in the interest of reform and philanthropy. The school of Robert Raikes of the Church of Eng-

land, besides getting its name from the day of its meeting, had no connection with the church except perhaps in the character of the noble man with his largeness of heart as the product of the church. The church produced Raikes and Raikes produced his school, which opened in a private home at Gloucester July, 1780, with a gathering of boys, for instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling.

It was a Sunday school only because that was the day of its meeting, and Mr. Raikes himself with large benevolent purposes regarded the work as "attempts at civilization." But there he found his renown, for his school is thought to have been the foundation of the public school system first in England and then in the United States. Beginning with this class of boys, and with limited purpose, he yet built for coming centuries. It was but a beginning, and yet its future went beyond calculation as to what it should do in the history of the world.

Almost simultaneously with the Raikes movement came the independent movement of William Fox, a layman in a Baptist church. He was born in the same county as Robert Raikes, the same year (1736) and the same day of the month—Fox, February 14th and Raikes, September 14th. As a young man he began business in London, first as retail merchant, then wholesale dealer, and became wealthy. He purchased his old home estate at Clapton, where he was born, and there started his first school, also in a private house. This school had its meeting on week-days, but with the Bible as its text-book, and paid its teachers for

their service. This was the beginning of the Bible school which would become the Sunday school.

In correspondence and conference with Raikes, William Fox got the idea of Sunday as the day of meeting. He brought the Bible into the Sunday school, put the Sunday school in charge of the Bible as its text-book, and made the study of the Scriptures its chief purpose. Later looking to the enlargement of the work, Fox offered a resolution in a meeting of the church of which he was a member, May, 1785, "that the meeting call upon the various denominations of England to unite in the organization of a society for the promotion of Bible study among the children of England." The resolution was adopted, the call was made, the society was organized September 7, 1785, and became "The Society for the Support and Encouragement of Sunday Schools."

The name was afterward changed to "The Society for Promoting Sunday Schools Throughout the British Dominion." But that date and meeting marked the real beginning of the modern Sunday school movement as an organized effort for the study of God's word. "Two years later (1787) Fox closed up his business, and devoted himself to advancing the Sunday school cause of Great Britain, and was for forty years England's most prominent Sunday school man. In a little while William Brodie Gurney, who in his boyhood days was frequently in the home of William Fox, appeared on the scene. He was a younger man than Fox, but became companion and associate with him in his new movement, and gave his services as teacher

without pay, and so started the volunteer system of Sunday school teaching."

Fox fixed the base line along which the whole movement should go through the succeeding years. From his time on the work grew rapidly, making not only its own history but also a place for itself among other great movements in history, which have since blessed and gladdened the world. It would be interesting to trace some of these, and show the relation of this mighty growing power to other great enterprises in their rise and onward progress. Always helping and never hindering, the Sunday school has proved a blessing everywhere, whether in making individual character, or as a dynamic force in the churches, or exerting its influence in the educational life of the nations. Over against this humble beginning we simply place the present imperial character of this institution, with its gigantic enterprise and investments for the kingdom of God as seen in the churches today.

From William Fox of London to Benjamin F. Jacobs of Chicago. They were separated by almost a century, and yet over the chasm of years they joined hands in oneness of spirit and purpose—Fox in his movement for promoting Bible study in the Sunday school, and Jacobs in his Uniform Lesson System for making the Sunday school what it is, and for unifying the Christian world in the study and teaching of the Scriptures. The Sunday school antedates and made possible the International Sunday School Association, and in turn the Association has done wonders in advancing the Sunday school cause and for development

in the Sunday school of all the elements of real power and greatness.

The Association draws its life from the several denominations, and then brings to them large returns in the way of inspiration, and in setting before them high ideals for the betterment of the Sunday school cause in their own churches. Moreover, to meet the demands of the Sunday school, there are immense business interests and investments which easily count into the millions. Large moneyed powers, therefore, are set for its advancement.

And measured even by commercial standards the Sunday school as an enterprise in church life, is gigantic and of almost startling proportions. Out of all these phases of its activities, energies and relations comes its almost boundless power to help and bless, to uplift and enlarge, to save and train for Christ in the service of his kingdom. Throughout all the years, and with a growth beyond compare, with shifting and changing methods, the Sunday school holds steadfastly to its original and cardinal idea of a school in the church for teaching the word of God.

Its Center of Energy in the Local Church. The Sunday school is a local affair, has its definite center of activity, and does its work within its own sphere. Even what it does in the widest sweep of its activities, it does as having the center of its energies in the local church. This is true notwithstanding the Sunday school itself is sometimes the planting of some mission station from which a church eventually comes. This indeed has often been the course of sowing and

reaping. Behind every such planting there is the influence of the church again directly or indirectly, one planting, another watering, and God giving the increase. The local Sunday school emphasizes the local church as the center of its agency, enriches the life of the church and augments its efficiency.

The word church in the title of this book and throughout these pages, designates a local organization, called sometimes the individual, particular or single church, to distinguish it from the larger conception and more general idea. This makes more definite and holds more strictly to what is here intended in our thought of the Sunday school as a church school. Christ's church as he set it for the expression and making of his kingdom was first one, then more than one, then a vast multitude, multiplying throughout the countries and centuries—but holding always its local idea and mission, as the church at Ephesus or the Church of God at Corinth. Then as now Christ first saved men individually, then grouped them into churches.

Men are regenerated by units, renewed by the Spirit of God one at a time, then set in churches for Christian culture and service. So the church has a spiritual membership, is entrusted with keeping the ordinances of the Lord's house as he commanded, and is commissioned to propagate his gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. Christendom does not appear as a church, not having local habitation or organic life. Christians, as we think of them, the world over and in the aggregate, are not a church, but a glorious people, a mighty

host saved by the grace of God, and gathered in churches almost without number, as may come from conditions and circumstances.

These churches are local centers of Christian energy and activity. This is no disparagement of the individual member in the fullness of all he may do for Christ. It rather makes him the greater through the oneness of the many and in the force of aggregate power. This is the fellowship of life and service, of doctrinal character and power, a sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

A Chosen Agency in the Furtherance of its Work. The Sunday school in the church is a manifestation of church life, an outgo of energy, a method of activity, with definiteness of purpose and aim. It is neither "the nursery of the church," nor a "workshop," but here the church through its school as one of its chosen instruments, is itself at work in the spirit which it has caught from heaven, and for the fulfillment of the mission which it receives from the heavenly King. Everything the church holds dear, every great interest and enterprise in which the church is engaged, everything which the church needs, whether for making it strong and mighty within, or powerful and projective in its influence upon the community—all is fostered and magnified in this school of the church, first made possible and then brought to pass.

The school becomes as an agency what the church makes it; is capable of almost indefinite expansion in church efficiency as a channel for the output of its energy and life. While holding steadfastly to the one

basal purpose of teaching the Scriptures, the Sunday school has yet greatly widened in its aim. As a force for study and teaching the word of God; as a force for evangelizing and bringing lost sinners to the Saviour; as a force for instruction and education in the mightiest things claiming the attention of men; as a force for mission operation in the world-wide sense; as a force for making Christian character in men and women; and for opening the door of usefulness on a large scale—in all these things so essential in the life and mission of the church, the Sunday school holds rank among its very first and chosen agencies.

It is at once field and force, giving opportunity to do and power to do, for building the kingdom of God. The Sunday school was not this at the first, but through the growth of years has come to this rank in modern church life, and challenges the admiration and co-operative support of all who themselves would do large things for God in the world, and who desire to see the church come to the full in turning many to righteousness, in shining as the stars, in making the name of Christ great among the nations of the earth.

Where the Altar Stands for Worship. Furthermore, the Sunday school in session, while still maintaining its function of teaching, and its service of activity, is also a service for the worship of God. This indeed should be the chief glory of the Sunday school. The worship of God in the beauty of holiness should distinguish its meeting as a sacred meeting, and its service as a holy service. This should be the all pervasive and holding power with the school as a whole

in the opening and closing moments, also throughout all its grades and in every class whether of beginners or adults.

This is the most momentous phase of the service, demanded by all urgent and lofty considerations. It rests with teachers and officers as to whether this worshipful spirit shall be present or absent. This will be the mark of whether the school is "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal," or a living power in fulfillment of its mission and purpose. It is not easy to maintain this spirit of devotion and worship, in the stir and drive of the school; it will require thoughtfulness and previous consideration, with earnestness of purpose to hold oneself to this supreme and most commanding attitude of mind and heart.

I am not pleading for a goodness that is "goody-goody," but for *worship* in spirit and in truth, for a godliness that is robust and cheery, for a godliness in form, but also in such power as makes heaven what it is. Let there be no thought for a moment that the worship of God has in it anything of gloom or shadow. Rather with soberness and deepness of spiritual flow, it will augment the buoyancy and joy of the service. It will bring in the sunshine and give dignity of character to all that is done, whether in singing, or praying, or talking, or teaching. In the presence of such worship, and under the spell of its power, unobtrusive but felt throughout the school, even the minor matters feel its touch and marshal up with the things which are great.

Of course God in the majesty and glory of his being

is not circumscribed by time or place, as to where we may worship him. God is no respecter of persons, and there is access to the throne whenever and wherever the soul cries out after him. And yet it is manifest from his word, from all history of dealing with men, and from the experience of his people, that it is worth while to have a set time and place for meeting him in worship. And there is no better place than his sanctuary, and no better time than in his service.

The training influence of worship is immense, of the highest character and helpful in every way. It fosters the sense of reverence as the basal element of character, and makes for strength in doing work for God. This high service cannot be commanded; it comes not from dictation nor from simple requirements. The ringing of a thousand bells cannot ring it in. It comes as the daylight comes, as the atmosphere comes, as the sweet aroma of devout hearts, as the indescribable outgo of spirits imbued with the Spirit of God. Blessed, many times blessed, are those who without ado can yet make God's presence felt in the Sunday school as a real power, and can add to the beauty and richness of its service in the worship of him who is all glorious in praise. It puts the Sunday school in kinship with the service which the angels render, glorifies it, augments its power to compass the ends for which it meets.

VIEWED AS IT NOW IS. No words can portray the Sunday school in its present commanding character, or its unmeasured power for God, as seen in its threefold relation to the church as institution, agency and service. This chapter may come to a fitting close in

giving the estimate of another—Dr. William E. Hatcher, of Virginia, in his book, "The Pastor and the Sunday School," when speaking out of the fulness of his heart, and from large experience in practical work as a pastor:

"These simple reflections lead us up to the central thought of this lecture—the imperial rank of the Sunday school in the community of Christian enterprises. . . . In many respects the Sunday school is a modest institution. It is a vast improvement on the past, and is one of the phenomenal products of Christianity, worthy of universal recognition as the most flexible, far-reaching institution ever yet devised for the conversion of this world. . . . It came into existence without flourish of trumpets, gained admission into the Christian heart of the world, and has received a welcome from every creed and sect. It wears about it the loftiest dignities, and yet comes with a smile for every child and a message of peace for every inquirer after the way of life.

"It is not an easy task to estimate the value of the Sunday school. It is a school with a single text-book, and that the word of God, and this invests it with an interest all its own. It has calmly chosen the entire human family as its constituency, and is enrolling its students by the millions. I stand uncovered before the achievements of the Sunday school. What mammoth organizations it has called into existence to do its bidding and minister to its wants. It has created a literature of its own, and is fast learning how to appropriate to itself all true literature. It has kinship for all

noble things, and draws from every quarter material for its own advancement. Itself a peerless educational power, it infuses its broadening educational spirit into all other things.

"What royal friends and supporters it has—ministers, scholars, eminent teachers from college and universities, men of every noble profession, men of affairs, men of wealth and power in the large walks of trade and finance, and better yet, women chosen of God and in living fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ, millions of them, whose perpetual joy is the study of the word which God has spoken unto us.

"No statistician will ever be able to count up its contributions to the kingdom of heaven. . . . Think of the countless thousands which year by year are conducted to the gates of the Celestial Kingdom and introduced into the Master's service by this benign Christian force. Think of the armies upon armies of the young who have gone to heaven shouting the Redeemer's praises as they went. They were the fruit of the Sunday school, and yet the schools, like the orchards of God, are bearing twelve manner of fruit every month."

Such is the commanding place of this school in its threefold character. It is a church institution, living, powerful and growing, an agency of the church mighty in doing things for the kingdom, a church service of teaching and worship exalted and pre-eminent in place and purpose. The mission and glory of the church becomes the mission and glory of its school.

CHAPTER II.

THE FUNCTION OF CHURCH TEACHING.

ENDOWED FOR TEACHING. Christ set his church to teach, and endowed it with power and equipment for teaching. This is his chosen method to perpetuate himself as teacher and to keep his teaching alive in the world. The endowment is the enduement with power from on high through the Holy Spirit of God, and the equipment is of the forces within the church itself, and of the heavenly structure in its making. For God hath set some in the church, apostles, prophets and teachers, or evangelists, pastors and teachers; these are for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body, for the unity of the faith, for giving the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

The church is not infallible in any sense or degree, and has made sad record in its play at authority. However, it is under imperative obligation to teach, and there must be no uncertain sound in speaking the word of the Lord. A keen sense of fallibility will keep it modest and cautious, while a sense of certainty and conviction will make it courageous and aggressive in the things which Christ has commanded. The two working together make for might and conquest, making "increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." The church has its growth in efficiency and

doctrinal character largely through the exercise of its teaching function. The watchword of the church for the twentieth century should be the watchword of the ancient prophets: "The word of the Lord came unto me saying, I the Lord hath spoken it and performed it." With such a message in its heart, and the fire ever burning on its altar, the church will be a church of power for this century and every century.

The church that does not teach is failing in its mission at the point of power and advantage—like a stalk of corn with much show of life, but yielding no harvest of grain for the garner; like a tree even rich in foliage, but bearing "nothing but leaves." In emphasizing what a church should do as a body, and in the aggregate of its membership, there is no abridgement of individual effort and responsibility. In magnifying the teaching office in the church, and its work of instruction, there is no intention to discriminate against other phases of its activity. Indeed there are many lines along which the church operates, and its field is very wide.

Preaching and teaching, for example, are different things in the New Testament conception, each having rank and place for which it was intended, and for which it is commanded. They supplement each other in wonderful fashion for saving the lost, for augmenting the inward life and power of the church, for building the kingdom, and for hastening the coronation of the King. But the object here is to magnify the function of teaching, and to set it out as so commanding and imperative as to enlist the attention of churches

everywhere and awaken them to its exercise in the fullness of power.

Successor to the Jewish Synagogue in Teaching the Scriptures. The people of God have always been a teaching people, and were taught in his law, and to walk in his commandments. This has been their distinction and honor, their power and glory among the nations of the earth. The synagogue of the Hebrew people, with the temple and its gorgeous ritual, was their place of worship, and its service was their place for instruction in the Scriptures. It was their school for teaching the word of God, supplemented always with marked effect by the instruction in the family circle. The home altar was not less powerful than the synagogue altar. Both of these were under divine appointment and command, and were for the making of individual character, for the adornment and enrichment of the home life, and for the power and safeguard of the life of the nation.

We need, of course, to discriminate closely between Judaism and Christianity. Jesus had already been taught concerning the Scriptures in the home and in the synagogue before he came to the temple at twelve years of age. There was no Jewish church; the synagogue was not a church, yet it was a place of worship, and its service a place for discoursing on the law and for the study of the Old Testament Scriptures. In this sense the church is successor of the synagogue in service, but has its institution and law in the New Testament, and is distinctly of the New Testament period, of New Testament constitution and character.

This is not the doing away with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but is only emphasizing their enlargement and fulfillment in the New—as the house built on the foundation, or as the fruit matures and comes to ripeness on the tree. The church having the Scriptures both of the Old Testament and the New, its text-book is larger and of greater fullness in the deep things of God. Its field of teaching, too, is of wider range, and richer in the unfolding of the scheme of redemption, and in meeting the needs of a lost world. All the more is the obligation upon the church with this immense advantage for fulfilling its mission as teacher and as adorning the doctrines of God our Saviour. Its ministration is the ministration of the Spirit as he guides in teaching. Its glory in this service surpasses the glory of the synagogue, and even the glory of the temple: "For if that which is done away is glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

THE TEACHING IS IMPERATIVE. He who made the church made it to teach and be taught out of the word of God. It has within itself by divine endowment and requirement, the function of teaching, as the human mind in its marvelous power has in itself the function of thinking or willing, of remembering or reasoning. The very efficiency and life of the church is in its teaching, in the exercise of this power which God has given in his endowment to this high service. The tongue does not fulfill its mission except it be used in the power of speech, nor the mind its mission except in the exer-

cise of its wonderful function in the realm of thought, nor the church unless it be doing the things which it was commanded and empowered to do.

Moreover, Christ's imperial word of authority is in his command to teach. With imperative emphasis he set the obligation and the bounds of teaching, namely, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded. In preaching and evangelizing, there is all the gospel for all the world, without abridgement or abatement. This is required to fulfill the scope of Christ's command, and as needful to undo the work which sin has done in the world. In the scope of teaching also there is need on our part, even pressing obligation to teach what he taught in its fullness and richness as the gospel of grace and redemption.

The commission of our Lord, spoken first nearly two thousand years ago, and in the majesty of his resurrection life, is in full force today, and is in nowise shortened as to scope of meaning and requirement. It is new every morning throughout the centuries, has its meaning for the church everywhere and for the disciples in every place. "Jesus came to them, and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Setting the Heavenly Forces in Motion. Our Lord spoke; and this commission set the mission of his

church and began its conquest in the hearts of men and throughout the nations of the earth. There is no need to discuss here the question, whether the commission was given to the church as such, or to his disciples. It makes no material difference; if to the church, then to the church in the aggregate of its membership, commanding each in his individual relation and life; if to the disciple as such, then to him as he may have individual opportunity or in co-operation with others. The point here is the emphasis which the commission gives to the function of church teaching, with every member filling his place. As the eye serves the hand, and the hand serves the foot, and all members one of another as it hath pleased God, they work toward the same glorious end of edifying the body and increasing it with the increase of God.

And this word of our Lord is the same for us now as it was to those who first heard him, perhaps with startling effect. Indeed it has a certain additional significance for us, because it has the augmented power of a record of conquest in the hearts of men, by the many thousands among all the nations of the earth and throughout all the intervening centuries of history. This commission lives today in the power of former conquest, in what it has already done for making the church great in saving power.

But here is the question—the question for the heart and the conscience, whether for the individual or the church—are we doing the things which our Lord commanded? Is the church meeting the call of this commission, responding to the risen and enthroned Lord

in the things which he bade us do? The function of church teaching, or if you prefer, the individual teaching of the commandments of Christ, is written large in this commission, and its word is imperative and imperial. Our relation to it is measured by what we are doing. If the Sunday school is not an agency effective or sufficient, then let other agencies be substituted or added; but let the teaching be done. Nothing short of this will meet the issues and demands of the age. Nothing less is commensurate with our obligation of love and loyalty, or allegiance and obedience.

Fourfold Function in the Commission. The church is a unit, composed of members through personal experience of grace, yet is a body or organization compact and complete in itself. There are, however, many channels and outlets for its energy in doing its work for the kingdom and in giving expression to its marvelous treasure of the manifold wisdom of God. As specified in the commission the function of the church is at least fourfold. Not that these are separate and distinct, standing apart from each other with hard and fast lines between. But these rather work together, overlapping, in co-operative sympathy, one supplementing and augmenting the other for consummation in one great purpose. In this, for example, the church is like the mind which is a unit, and while preserving its unity, yet functions in thinking or feeling, in willing or remembering, in choosing or purposing. In each case the whole mind is at work, giving force and energy in the specific operation, each intensifying the other and doing the work of the one mind.

So also in this fourfold function of the church, each function is made greater through its association with the others. These for convenience may be enumerated as follows: (1) The missionary function—going with the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth without abatement of message or abridgement of field; (2) the evangelizing function—heralds of the cross, preaching the gospel and making disciples of all nations; (3) the administrative or ceremonial function—baptizing and otherwise caring for the affairs and ordinances of the house of God; (4) the didactic function—teaching the doctrines and observance of the things which Christ commanded, building up the saved in doctrinal character, leading them out into the larger life of loyalty to the King and service in his kingdom.

Distinct but Working in Harmony as One. They all work together—this missionary, this evangelizing, this baptizing with its wonderful significance, this teaching to observe the things commanded, all these several phases of activity in the one church, combine in fulfillment of the commission, as meeting its requirements and doing its work in the world. Teaching as a function of church life holds rank with the others, coming last in order and as the consummation and crowning glory of the others. As the eyes are empowered to see and the heart is empowered to love, so it has pleased God in the fullness of his grace to empower the church to teach, to hold forth the word as the light of the world and the life-giving power among men.

In the church, therefore, as a unit, as with the human

body and mind, there is yet diversity of gifts, powers or functions, for operation in different ways. These work themselves outward and find their expression in diversity of ministries, but all to one end. The one and the self-same church operates in them all unto its own edification, and for meeting its own individual responsibility and opportunity. These several phases of church life may be separated for illustration and discussion or for sake of separate emphasis, but they must be held in their oneness of working in the one church. God works in and through them as methods of operation. Diversity of ministries there are indeed, "but the same God which worketh all and in all. And all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will," and dividing to every church also in doing the things which it is commanded to do.

Teaching the Church Creed. In pressing the ministry of teaching we come inevitably upon the question of what to teach and where the obligation lies. It confronts the teacher when with his class; it confronts the church in supporting its school and becoming responsible for the teaching; it confronts the pastor when training his teachers for the high office of teaching. The question will not down, and should be met with true hearts and with the fear of God.

The purpose of the Sunday school, as will be seen in a separate chapter, is to teach the Scriptures. But as a categorical proposition that is not sufficient as an honest effort either to answer the questions or to meet the issues which confront thinking people. There

must be, honest dealing in the church school requires, the teaching of church creed. But what creed and what church creed? Why, of course, the creed of the church in whose name the teaching is done, and which maintains the management of the school. There is nothing narrow in this, but rather broadness and the meeting of high moral obligation.

For any Sunday school or teacher to fall short of this indeed, is incongruous, and not far removed from the immoral and the traitorous. One may decline a position as teacher or retire from office if need be to preserve his own conviction, but let him not violate this almost the mightiest of all trusts—the trust of teaching. The church, like a person that believes little in general and nothing in particular, will be weak and unstable in life and service. This takes the church back of the obligation to teach, to the more weighty and trying responsibility of what to believe.

There is need for conviction in belief and conviction in teaching. Loose believing is almost a sure forerunner of loose conduct. The interpretation of the Scriptures is the business of the church school; the church must measure its creed by the word of God; must make its creed quadrate with the Scriptures, changing its creed if need be, but holding true and fast to the Scriptures as the one authority and supreme rule of faith and life. Nothing unscriptural has any place in the Sunday school as a church school, for here we must have the word of the Lord in what the word of the Lord is saying.

CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY IN TEACHING. The

church is responsible for its belief and doctrine, as well as for its character and life. This requires emphasis and consideration, calls for caution and concern, demands vigorous and aggressive exercise of the function of church teaching. To leave off teaching in the church is like leaving off the use of the hand in the body, or the exercise of the will in the mind. It makes incompleteness, deficiency, weakness, and the whole mighty affair fails of its lofty purpose. The church must do the thing which it was set to do, and its school for teaching the Scriptures is an agency organized and well adapted to that end. Church responsibility, the responsibility of the individual, local church, is distinctive, inevitable, imperative. The church must answer to God for its preaching and teaching, for its doctrine and doctrinal character, for its place and influence in the community.

Emphasized by its Origin, Nature and Destiny. The church came with the coming of Christ, is of his appointment, is for the doing of his work, and is entrusted with the keeping of his ordinances, with the preaching of his gospel and the propagation of its principles. Like the family, the church is of divine origin. God thought the church and in the fullness of time the church came, emerging in the course of history after the plan and purpose of the divine thought. It set a new date in the world's calendar, and ushered in a new era. Having its membership of those who are new creatures in Christ Jesus, the church is God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. And out of the church as his chosen instrument of

power, God will show in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

DISTINCT PLACE FOR DISTINCT SERVICE. The church, therefore, is in the world as the church of God, as the church of Christ; its responsibility is commensurate with its origin and nature, with its far-reaching mission and purpose. Its function for teaching is one of its richest endowments, and equipment for the high service is its touch and kinship with heaven. It stands for God in Christ, for the world's redemption through the shedding of his blood, for the embodiment, the expression, the sending abroad through preaching and teaching, of the wondrous words of the world's incomparable Teacher. It stands in his stead for teaching, and gives out the precious words which fell from his lips, when speaking as none other ever spoke.

The church had its origin from him. Its commission to teach came from him. Its power and triumph come as his enduement. It lives for him, and is in the world for his glory. His word of command and promise, full of music and charming sweetness, is for the church now as it was at the first; as you go, I am with you; as you evangelize and make disciples, I am with you; as you baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, I am with you; as you teach to observe what has been commanded, I am with you. I am with you always, even to the end of the world. His ever blessed presence in the teaching service of his church is its power, and charm, and heavenly touch.

CHAPTER III.

A METHOD OF CHURCH INSTRUCTION.

A SCHOOL IN PURPOSE. Instruction is the first mark of a school, its heart and life, all else being incidental and contributive. The school's character and rank are determined by the quality and efficiency of the instruction. As the teaching service of the church the Sunday school has distinct purpose and aim. It has method, condition and scope of instruction peculiar to itself. This volume is written on the presumption that the Sunday school is a school, but not like other schools. It has its own place in educational processes, does work in its own way, and serves in the church as a chosen instrument of God for teaching his word.

Instruction has kinship at once with structure as a building process, and with education as a process of development and training. Structure equals building, construction equals building together, putting material into oneness and orderly compactness; instruction equals building within, making structure within from materials furnished to hand. It is a process of character building and training in mind and heart. It is to form and inform through the communication of knowledge; to teach and indoctrinate, to educate and train, to build, enlighten and furnish with truth.

Surely with the human soul as its sphere, with the Scriptures as its instrument in the process, the instruction becomes momentous, august, commanding. It appeals to everything in us that is noble and worth while, opens a vast future rich and golden in opportunity; it magnifies the significance of God's chosen appointment for teaching the things pertaining to his kingdom. It justifies the high rank to which this church school has come among the Christian forces of today.

What Makes a School. Speaking broadly, a school may be considered in five parts: (1) *Personnel,* in its corps of teachers and pupils who register for instruction; (2) *equipment,* in building and apparatus, in organization and all those things necessary to its work; (3) *text-book,* curriculum and scope of teaching, purpose and aim; (4) *instruction,* as the specific work in the class room where teacher and pupil meet face to face, with mind against mind and heart against heart; (5) *fruitage,* in the output of the school, its product in character and life of those who pass from its halls of learning. This analysis applies to any school, whether the great university or the little public school hid away in the mountain, whether the Sunday school in the great city church with its hundreds in attendance, or the Sunday school of the small church out on the plains.

In every school there is the personnel and equipment, the organization and management, the text-book, the instruction, and the fruitage. These several marks signalize the Sunday school in its commanding char-

acter as a school after its own kind. Comparisons are frequently made between the Sunday school and the day school, to the disparagement for the most part of the Sunday school. This is unwise and unjust, for they differ more or less radically at almost every point of comparison.

A school is measured by its efficiency for meeting its intention, and by the nature of the aim and purpose toward which it is working. There is, of course, no conflict between the day school and the Sunday school. Each operates in its own sphere. Each works toward its own purpose and aim. Each yields fruit after its kind. It is better that comparison be left unmade. Their methods are not the same, nor their subjects of study, nor their aim. Yet in both there must be teacher and pupil, teacher and instruction, with the spirit proper and fitting each in its place.

Preventing Waste at the Top. It is sometimes entered as complaint against the Sunday school in comparison with the secular school as a method of instruction, that it fails to hold the young in coming to manhood and womanhood. Much is said about "waste at the top." But investigation shows that this same thing is true in the best secular schools. Only small per cent of pupils in the public schools enter the high school, and still smaller per cent graduate from the high school. The number lessens as the schooling advances to the higher grades. The senior class in our best universities and colleges is smaller than the freshman class. The fault is not the absence of holding power in the school, but must be sought in condi-

tions to be considered. But it should not by any means be used to disparage the Sunday school, though no effort should be spared to correct the evil.

The school should have the best service, the most effective and efficient teaching, whether with the many or the few in attendance. Jesus did the work that reached the mark with one person, with only one at the well and with only one as he taught in the shadow of the night. Not how many have we, but what are we doing with them, is the pressing question and final test of every school.

TEACHERS TRAINED FOR THE WORK. Teaching is a noble art, a delicate and difficult task, a high and responsible calling. The masters in the schoolroom are the real masters in the world's history. The making of teachers is of the first moment; it lays foundation for something greater than building empires, and creates forces of cumulative power which shall outlast the stars, and shall in ages on ages telling outshine their splendor. This is true in the whole domain of teaching, and comes to the school of the church with new emphasis and peculiar meaning. What the teacher is and does in this center of power, goes far toward making character and conduct with the pupil, far toward settling the destiny of lives and souls of men, far toward determining for the life and efficiency of the church, its character and reputation in the community.

The teachers of the church largely make and mark the church as to what it shall be for God, and for the betterment of men, and for the glory of Christ. The

church must, therefore, have trained teachers for its school; trained in mind, in heart, and in teaching skill. The teacher's effectiveness lies in what he is and what he has, in his equipment of mind and skill of heart. In this school there must be with the teacher the power from on high, and in his heart the grace of God which makes him a new creature in Christ Jesus. This is a primal and basal need. It will adorn and give effectiveness to whatever other training he may have, and whatever equipment from those who train in the art of teaching. But without this, other qualities and attainments are inadequate, sometimes weak and lifeless, sometimes working harm, even desolation and death.

All training for this school must keep in view the purpose of the school, and its lofty aim, first and ultimate. A teacher must be qualified in the line of its teaching; to teach the Scriptures, he must know the Scriptures; to teach Christ, he must know Christ in his saving grace and power; to deal with the human soul in its marvelous depths and delicate experiences, he must, so far as may be, know the pupil in mind and heart, in his spiritual needs, and in the call of his heart after God. This is the Holy of holies in teaching. Here one may well stand abashed. It is of imperative importance and a reasonable requirement.

The Need for Church Training. The need for training its own teachers is itself a work for church concern and direction. This phase of teacher training is having increasing emphasis, and will be more and more demanded to meet conditions and necessities in the church school. The training must be for a work

specific and direct. If one is to work in marble, then he must be trained in the art of marble; if he is to handle chisel and mallet, then he must be skilled for their use; if the paint, brush and canvas are his, then he must be trained in the art of bringing these things together in painting and picture. If a man is to teach botany, surely he must know botany; but remember always that any one subject can be most thoroughly known when its place and relation to other great subjects in the several departments of learning are taken into account.

All this applies with special force to teachers and teaching in the church school. Writers in rhetoric mark preachers and preaching as distinct specimens of public speaking, and judge them in a class by themselves for special purpose. So it is with Sunday school teachers. They make a class in themselves, and must be trained in their own sphere, and be estimated within their class. This is simple, straightforward pedagogy. Anything short of this, or apart from this, is unpedagogical, because it fails to use the highest means for the highest ends.

The Pedagogy of the Sunday School. It is not the present intention to discuss the technique of Sunday school method, nor the teachnical art of teaching. But can pedagogy help in the high and specific teaching required in this schoolroom? Surely, *provided* it widen its range so as to include the adult mind as well as the child mind, for this school has all ages, classes and conditions; *provided* it restrict itself to the Scriptures as the subject of study and the instrument

for doing this exceptional work; *provided* it hold steadfastly in view the spiritual needs of the pupil, the spiritual forces at work, and the spiritual aim to be wrought out in this school as a method of church instruction.

Successful teaching, as pedagogy requires, always accords with the laws of teaching and with the laws of the mind, though sometimes all unconsciously with pupil and teacher. A nurse, for example, may feed the child, neither of them knowing anything of the digestive or assimilative process. These physical laws, however, do their work, hunger is satisfied, and the child grows. So let it be frankly confessed that we may know and even guide human nature without knowing psychology, that we may teach with success without knowing the rules of mental operation and without scientific knowledge of pedagogy. This means no disrespect to these departments of learning, but needs to be said as holding things in proper adjustment, to give things proper value and keep them rightly balanced in the sphere of teaching.

Pedagogy Coming to its Best. Educational psychology and scientific teaching will come to their highest rank and service, when they meet the demands of the specific method of teaching in this school, and when they fulfill this highest and noblest purpose which can enlist the mind and heart. This school deserves the best methods of instruction, and yet teaching is teaching so far as method is concerned, whether in the school for Monday or Sunday. And that is the best teaching which is the most efficient in matching

truth to mental movements so as to get the best results.

Psychology has explored the mind with remarkable precision, and has discovered wonders of its working unsurpassed by the discovery of astronomy among the stars, or geology among the rocks, or botany among the flowers. Pedagogy following the lead of psychology, and applying its principles in the schoolroom for educational purposes, is rendering valuable service, and has the promise of even better things for the future. It is yet of recent origin, and those who attempt its use will need to measure their words, and walk modestly in this field where there is much uncertainty and confusion, and where even the masters are modest and recognize for the most part that the questions and answers are yet problematical.

If educational psychology is to be of service here, it must hold itself strictly to the purpose and aim of this school while teaching in its sphere. For the aim here is to instruct in the doctrines concerning God, with the Scriptures as the instrument in the process; with the view of presenting saving truth for saving the lost, and for making one God-like in character, God-fearing and God-honoring in life, Christ-like in speech and conduct among men. In this field of instruction, and with this highest attainment in all that is human, pedagogy will yet find its highest renown and reward —even when it comes in the future to be classed among the exact sciences. For there is no nobler sphere or service. The great Webster once said: "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will

go on prospering; but if we or our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us." Here in this church school for instruction in these imperishable principles of God's word, we make for the nation's life, for its future welfare and for its imperishable greatness among the destinies of nations.

THE MAN IN CHARGE OF ITS AFFAIRS. There is need in this school for the best organization, with its furniture and equipment, its officers and management. The subject is fully discussed, and in helpful ways in books written to this end. It is introduced here simply in recognition and emphasis of its vital importance, and as contributing to the efficiency of the method of instruction.

The pastor, by virtue of his office in the church, is the first man in its school. No man can take his place, nor can he delegate his trust to another. There can be no rival to his ministration in the pulpit, and no competition in the trust committed to his care. He is not, however, the man in charge of the Sunday school service, though here as in all the concerns of the church he has the oversight, and must maintain the closest interest and helpfulness. The superintendent, however, is the man in charge. This belongs to him, and is his business. He is the strategic man for the hour and of the service. As the superintendent leads, so almost surely the school will go throughout its session. We need to magnify the superintendent, and if possible have him magnify his office and his ministry. It is his to shape, direct and give tone to this great service

in which the church sets itself to teach the word of God.

For the Superintendent as Well as Teachers. Much has been said and done for making teachers, but hardly enough for making superintendents. This is one of the weak points in the Sunday school of today. We have crowded the programs with discussion and the markets with literature for helping the teacher in his teaching. Surely no one can be averse to that, for it is of utmost moment. Our plea now is entered for helping the superintendent, and making him master in the office to which his brethren have called him, and to which he turns his heart for success. The pastor may contribute largely to making the superintendent, and making superintendent and teachers may for the present moment at least go beyond making sermons.

Through these agencies the pastor multiplies himself many times over, and augments his pastoral power; he makes himself felt through these chosen spirits of his own culture, throughout the school, throughout the church life, throughout the entire community. Surely it is worth his while and calls for the best that is possible in his thought and skill. A pastor on coming into a new pastorate found a lawyer as superintendent of the Sunday school, and one almost worthless because of his inefficiency. He was without reproach as a man, able and successful in his profession, managed all his legal business with legal ability, but failed utterly in this trust committed to him of ministering to the Sunday school.

The situation was a problem for the pastor, and his

first thought was to displace the superintendent, but the lawyer was too well entrenched for that, both with the people at large and even in the school. Finally there was a gracious talk and conference between pastor and superintendent, with the suggestion from the pastor of reading a book on Sunday school training. The book was read, and then other books with a rising tide of enthusiasm. It was in the lawyer's heart like awakening from the dead, and stirred the dry bones of his Sunday school life. The pastor soon found that he had now one of the best superintendents; the whole school took on new life and moved with a statelier step; the church itself felt the touch of the new power. The pastor had made a superintendent of this man, who was possessed of immense resources, but before had been undeveloped and of little service in the kingdom.

Conducted in the Spirit of its Purpose. This is imperative in the school for church instruction. It is the opportunity and hour of kingly dominion for the superintendent, but requires skill and grace. There must be organization, of course, and method in the service, otherwise all will go haphazard and run riot in confusion. But the organization must be an organism as well, and of organific power and energy. The stir and push of the gathering forces must be held in the channel and guided in the spirit and purpose of the school.

A business man of New York, telling with sympathy and concern of the work, said: "It looks as if we are about to grade God out of the Sunday school." And

one of our ablest religious journals had an editorial, the title of which hung out somewhat as a danger signal: "Rescue the Sunday school," and pointed out the danger of too much machinery and mechanical grind in "the up-to-date methods." These were not intended as criticisms, nor would we repeat them except as indicating tendency and possibility. There is something grave and serious when the situation provokes such comments on the part of earnest friends. Those in control must master this danger, and set counter-currents for turning the gathering energies, and subduing them with the lofty purpose of the hour.

We must hold the thought of God at the center of the school's activities as a quiet but all-pervasive influence. What an opportunity comes to the superintendent as he opens the school, if only he has made preparation in mind and heart. That hour is the flower and fruitage of his week's work, when the general touch of leadership is felt throughout the school. This beautiful, far-away ideal is yet possible with the right man in the right spirit.

The superintendent may not lead the singing, or even be able to sing, but his heart and good judgment will choose the songs, and even direct the music in richer and more masterful way than in simply acting as leader of songs. His prayer into which he puts the burden of his heart for the school, his reading the Scriptures in reverent spirit, his touch with every chord and movement as the school assembles, as the classes form and the work of teaching begins and closes—these are the *things* of his power if only he keeps him-

self as God's servant chosen to this work of the kingdom. It is his to bring in the evangelistic spirit and converting power, his to bring in the teaching spirit with teacher and hearing heart with pupil, his to bring in the spirit of devotion and make this teaching service of the church also a service of worship. It is the superintendent's privilege in a high sense to lift the gates and let the King of glory come in.

And so this school, as a method of church instruction, comes to its crowning Sunday by Sunday; its fruitage is as the heavenly manna; its music like the song which the angels sing. This great hour in the church life comes to a close, and the commission of our Lord is in line of fulfillment. The church bears fresh testimony to his saving grace and conquering power.

CHAPTER IV.

ITS PURPOSE TO TEACH THE SCRIPTURES.

CIRCUMSCRIBED BUT OF COMMANDING OUTREACH IN THOUGHT. The Sunday school is a teaching service, but restrictive in its curriculum. This does not mean narrowness. It maintains distinctive character, moves in its distinct sphere, but that sphere borders the infinite. Restriction does not mean hampered or want of largeness in freedom. The eagle's flight has its limit, but excels the flight of all other birds. The ocean is hemmed in by shores of sand, but has also leagues on leagues with immeasureable distances. We walk its shore, enjoy its breeze, listen to its ceaseless roar, gather pebbles from its beach, while children play in its sand, but know not its depths beneath nor its distances beyond. Halley's comet has its limit, too, but its orbit has billions on billions of miles from point to point. It came and went, like a specter stalking among the stars; we gazed on the shining course, wondered, but knew not whence or whither. It went out in space, we say, but what do we know of seven billions of miles in space? Yet that comet holds to its orbit, and moves in the sphere of its limitations. So do all the heavenly bodies.

Something like this, except in larger and more significant way, is true of both the teaching service and

preaching service of the church of God. They have points in common, they are circumscribed, but of commanding outlook in thought, in purpose and aim, and in far away glories that wait. Preaching is limited in subject to Christ and him crucified, but Christ crucified has infinite relations in heaven and earth. The theme is sufficient to embarrass the greatest preachers, to engage and abash the thought of angels. Angels desire to look into the wonders of the cross, while man cries out of the depths of his soul, who is sufficient to tell its wondrous story? While the crucified One is discredited by the Jew as a stumbling-block, and by the Greek as foolishness, he is yet both the wisdom of God and the power of God to them who are saved. For it pleased God, in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

One Text-book and One Purpose. The Sunday school, likewise as the teaching service of the church, has its limit with the one text-book, but is infinite in scope of study and instruction. It has one day in seven for its allotted time, and one hour in twenty-four as its session limit, yet its teaching covers the whole range of thought concerning God and man, concerning human character and conduct, concerning duty in its manifold relations, and destiny in the far-away sweep of the ages to come. No other school has such a task, or mission of more commanding import. None bears fruitage richer or more abundant in the things which make for human welfare, and for the advancement of

society and for safeguarding all men count dear and worth having.

Its one text-book is the Bible—the Holy Scriptures, sixty-six books in one, the Book of books. It contains in one the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, are the only sufficient and authoritative rule of saving knowledge, faith and obedience. It is a treasure of heavenly instruction, has God for its author, salvation for its end, teaches no error, and is the supreme standard for judging human conduct and creeds. On this book when closed, and ablaze on its pages when open, as the imprimatur of heaven, are the words of Jesus: Search the Scriptures; they are they that testify of me; and the Scriptures cannot be broken.

The one purpose of the Sunday school, in fulfilling this high mission, is to teach the Scriptures—to teach the Bible as the word of God, the Holy Scriptures which are able, whether with child or adult, to make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. The teacher in the teaching service, like the preacher in the preaching service, has to do with this *one book*—the one with his sermon-text for preaching, the other with his lesson-text for teaching. With both there will be such aim as the book itself will furnish and will require, such spirit and attitude of mind as become those who bear a message from the King.

For sake of emphasis it may be said the work of the Sunday school is threefold: First, teach the Scriptures; second, teach the Scriptures; third, teach the Scriptures. There must be no departure from this one pur-

pose. Everything centers in this, and must contribute to its commanding aim. The injunction to the preacher is: Preach the word, and for the teacher also, Teach the word; and for preacher and teacher alike, as having largely the same purpose and aim: Be instant in season and out of season; rightly dividing the word of truth and giving to each his portion in due season; do the work of an evangelist; make full prove of thy ministry whether in preaching or teaching; take heed unto thyself, and unto the teaching, for in so doing thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee, whether in the small class or the great congregation.

Lesson and Lesson Text. The choice from Scripture of lesson text is of much importance, but hardly calls for discussion here. There is need for system both in choosing the text and in the method of instruction. This affords ample room for variety in study and teaching, for difference of judgment and interpretation. The Uniform Lesson System has never been excelled in its method for general use in teaching the Scripture. Its effect has been marked in unifying the Sunday school world in this one purpose, and holding Christian people around the globe to regular courses in the study of the whole Bible. The Lesson Committee, through the successive years, has managed its work with excellent skill, and deserves the grateful recognition of all who love and honor the Scriptures as the word of God.

The Graded Lessons to match graded classes in the school, afford many advantages. The system will yet need to be worked out with care, for safeguarding vital

points of interpretation both in Scripture and in the study of child nature. But there is large room here, and urgent need also of adhering to the one purpose of Sunday school teaching, and to the one book as the text-book for all grades. This is fundamental, and should stand as the guiding principle in all Sunday school work, whether grading the classes or grading the teaching.

But the thing most pressing and of greatest importance with the Sunday school teacher, as with the preacher, is his attitude of mind toward the book itself, his right interpretation of its wonderful words, and his spirit in teaching. There is here deepest and most abiding need. Uniform text between two or more preachers does not mean uniform preaching, nor a uniform sermon in grade of thought, method of treatment or expression. Having the same text may count for nothing. All depends on the preacher. Nor does a uniform lesson text require or secure uniform lesson or teaching by the several teachers in the school. Personality counts for much, both in preacher and teacher; the audience, whether class or congregation, counts for much in preaching or teaching; the purpose and aim are great factors, while the heart behind the teaching and preaching will almost settle every other question as to effectiveness and fruitfulness.

THE WORD OF GOD WHICH HE SPEAKS TO MEN. The teacher with the Bible bears the message of God to his people, and to the world lost in the desolation which sin has wrought. It is a message of grace and mercy, of instruction and hope, of life and salvation.

The Scriptures speaking for themselves give no uncertain word concerning the origin and nature of the Bible, its authority in the thought and lives of men, its value to those who will live in its light and walk in its ways. Everywhere throughout its pages there is the heavenly message with the heavenly accent—hear ye the word of the Lord. "For the prophesy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." "All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

There are three kingly words concerning the Scriptures, authenticity, inspiration, authority. These in the fullness of their meaning should hold commanding place with the teacher in mind and heart, in his thinking and teaching. Discrediting or discounting at any point is weakness and helplessness throughout. The universal challenge of the Scriptures to men everywhere are these simple words, come and see. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." Its flavor is the heavenly flavor, and its fragrance is the fragrance from the heavenly paradise of God.

God established communication with man at the first, having endowed him with power of seeing, feeling, hearing, other than the physical and outward. God's first call to the first man—where art thou?—came upon him in the fall, and sent him out as a sinner. Then came the call to Cain, fixing upon him the mark

of murder and sending him forth with a sense of sin, which was more than he could bear. Then came God's call to Noah, with Noah's answer in building the ark against the coming day of destruction. Then came the call to Abraham, with his going forth he knew not whither but for the building of a nation in answer to God's call. And so on through the centuries until the Bible period was covered, and the Scriptures completed in the closing words of Revelation.

That We Can Hear and Answer. The process continues, with God calling and man answering; but man now having in what is written, the standard for his faith, the test of his judgment, the rule of his life. For us even more than with Paul and the early Christians "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

The Bible, therefore, is God's revelation of himself, being his word of communication to man, and a record of the answers which men have made to his call. This is the sum and substance, the heart and life of its wonderful history. Here in what has been, we see what may be day by day in experience of human hearts and in the lives of men as they go in their daily walk. This power to call God, like the wireless call of distress over the highways of the sea, and this power to hear God and to answer God's call, are perhaps the deepest elements of the human soul, and bring the richest experiential life that awakens the rapture of human hearts.

Surely it was wonderful that God should come down

in the back side of the desert and awaken the solitude of the mountain with his call, Moses, Moses; but hardly less wonderful that the keeper of the sheep should hear the call, be awakened to a sense of fear, be conscious of standing on holy ground, and answer with obedient heart, Here am I. It is written of Moses that "he endured as seeing him that is invisible," when accounting for his turning aside from the glories of Egypt and choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. The Duke of Argyle in his Unity of Nature gives us the profound word: "There is something in man, call it what you may, but something which can see the invisible, feel the intangible, hear the inaudible." And psychology must take account of that fact or be unphilosophic; pedagogy must take account of that fact or be unscientific.

KNOWING GOD THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES. This means no discredit of the voice of nature for nature's God. "The heavens declare the glory of God." "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven." "That which may be known of God is manifest. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." The sure word of the stars, the unbroken course of nature, the displays of wisdom and power on every hand, can hardly be misread in their testimony for God, who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth. But the Bible is the more sure word of prophecy, shows how God reveals himself and comes into the life of men, opens the way of redemption through the cross, and

makes plain the highway for deliverance and glory. And even nature in its wondrous story like the impulses of the human heart, is best understood when read in the light of God's word.

The Bible is our Jacob's ladder, with angels ascending and descending, with God finding us in the dark with our sins and revealing himself in his grace. The Bible is our burning bush, with God coming to us in the daily life, calling us by name and calling out of the deep of his mysteries. The Bible is our pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, with God in the flaming and unerring beacon, calling to wandering men: This is the way, walk ye in it. The Bible is our temple, where God comes to us as he did to Samuel, calling in the stillness of the night, and we awake, wonder and wait for some one to tell us that the call is of God. The Bible is our temple again, where, like Isaiah, we see the Lord sitting on his throne, high and lifted up, his train filling the temple, and the highest song of the highest angels crown him with honor and glory. Like Isaiah, too, stricken in our hearts with deep sense of sin we cry, *unclean,* but find the cleansing power, hear his call, and have our commission from the throne.

Being Taught Concerning God. This marvelous display of revelation in the Scriptures does not make us overlook the fact that Jacob's ladder was called a type of Christ. And so it was in wonderful fashion. But without the Bible we would know nothing of the ladder, nothing of Christ, nothing either of type or antitype. The knowledge which the Bible has given of God, directly and indirectly, is so widespread

and so well fixed that we cannot imagine the dense ignorance that would follow concerning God, if the Bible were wiped from the face of the earth with all that it has given to men. It would be like the sun going out at midday, with no moonlight to follow, and no starlight. Men would still feel after God, and cry after God, like the child hungry or startled in the night crying for the mother.

It is sometimes said we must not "worship a book." "Do away with the book, and get back to Christ." But we cannot get back to Christ without the book, and can know nothing of his redeeming love or of the shedding of his blood for redemption—nothing of him, nothing of God, with everything lost in the darkness—in the world without God, without Christ or hope. Even the inner light would become darkness, and the inner impulse, however good and lofty it might be, could hardly be more that a master captain with his ship in a stormy sea with neither sun nor stars nor chart nor compass.

The Instrument in the Process of Teaching. Men need the Bible as badly as men need God, the one as a means, the other as a gracious end, lest the well be deep and nothing to draw with. So the Bible is a wide-open door for the study of God and his ways, for teaching his truth, for showing men his wondrous grace and saving power. Whether the book be relating history or making didactic statements, it always moves on the same high plane and toward the same high end, that men shall know God and his Son Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent into the world. Everywhere this

one mighty book of God is our means of knowing and teaching him, and this school of the church is a powerful agency and noble service in fulfillment of that lofty aim.

All knowledge of the Bible, as to its books and writers, as to its history and geography, as to its characters and their achievements, as to its high precepts and lofty literature—all this is as nothing except in so far as it centers and culminates in our knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. We go to its history again and again, not to learn more of its men and women, but to see and learn more of God's dealing with their lives, and to learn more of him and his ways.

For example, consider that wonderful chapter in the world's history, God's dealing with Cornelius. In a sense we care little for the Roman centurian and his place in the mighty empire of the world, but in what marvelous and startling way God there uncovers his method in answering prayer. We see in the method how a man is set to answer his own prayer, how his prayer again finds answer through the coming of another man, how the answer comes through the gracious working of heavenly forces and by way of the throne, how connection and communication are established between Cæsarea and Joppa, between the servant of the Roman empire and the servant of the Lord—and all to one glorious end of God answering a call for mercy and help, and for telling the man what to do.

The teacher may know even with familiarity all that is written of the Patriarchal triumvirate—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but he comes to a fresh study of their

history to learn not more of them, but of their God as he wrought with them and in their lives—to study afresh the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, the great I AM of eternity, who is in all human history as the God of the individual, of the family, of the nation. Here he learns of God who reveals himself to men, who moves with gracious and guiding power in their affairs, who is the prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God, who is covenant-making and covenant-keeping in the wonders of his condescension and providence, who moreover works out great destinies for men and crowns them with glory and honor—doing large and gracious things for them here with larger things hereafter.

Conviction in Teaching. The God of the Bible is the God of the Sunday school teacher, and the teacher's business and mission, august and overwhelming in its greatness, is to represent God in teaching the Scriptures, to make known his ways of grace and mercy, of his justice and power in dealing with men, and as being "glorious in holiness, fear in praises, doing wonders." With such a task conviction of heart and mind is imperative, even inevitable if only one can realize into what mighty presence he comes. In holding to the one purpose of the Sunday school with its one text-book, the teacher must come to his teaching with two things, namely, conviction as to its doctrine, and seeking the Spirit of God to aid in understanding his word and in opening the hearts to attend unto his message.

This must not pass as a mere platitude or common

place. It is vital, imperative, and lies at the very heart of Sunday school mission and aim, efficiency and achievement. There must be conviction concerning the word of God as to its facts of history, conviction as to its authorship and authority, conviction as to its doctrine of sin and salvation, conviction as to the value and power of the cross in human redemption, conviction as to the need of the work of grace in human hearts, for repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. How the teacher does need in his study and teaching the ever recurring vision of God, and the fresh coming of the power from on high.

This is his inspiration and safety. This will keep him in the right spirit of teaching, and help him to rightly interpret his great message. This will make him a power in the school, and the school a power in the life of the church, and the church a power in the kingdom of God. For it is not by human might nor power, but by his Spirit, and they shall be willing in the day of his power.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH AS TEACHER.

AT THE MOST VITAL POINT. This chapter has to do with the Third Person in the Godhead, and moves almost exclusively in the realm of New Testament conception. The thought at least has clearer, stronger, more definite statement in the New Testament Scriptures. It is written of the Son as the Second Person, "It pleased the Father that in him should dwell all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," as indicative of essential Deity in Jesus of Nazareth. In the abundant light of Scripture it may be also said, that in the Third Person there is all fullness of the Godhead, not bodily of course, but in fullness of Spirit as to Person and power. Hence God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

"The kingdom of God," which is of the heart and cometh not with observation, "is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." This kingdom, however, has its outward expression in church organization, is made visibly manifest in church life and activities, as the instrument of its growth in the world. The church is the called of God and the sent of Jesus Christ, but the Holy Spirit is the chief and powerful factor in the calling and sending. In the church at Antioch, for example, "the Holy

Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And being sent forth by the Holy Spirit," these two men began the first great preaching tour. Later Paul with his new companion in labor, being "forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia, assayed to go into Bythynia; but the Spirit suffered them not." Then came the vision from Macedonia, and they went, "assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel unto them."

At Philippi Paul found his audience made ready, waiting by the riverside. A woman named Lydia, who worshiped God, heard him preach, "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the word spoken by Paul." So also in answer to prayer from the Roman centurian, God met Simon Peter in a vision, and while Peter thought on the vision, "the Spirit said unto him, Behold three men seek thee; Arise therefore, and get thee down and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them." The men, the hour and the occasion met. For while Peter was speaking the word to the assembled company in the Cæsarean home, the Holy Spirit came upon them even as he had come upon the disciples at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and they glorified God, and were baptized in the name of the Lord.

Always a Distinguished Mark. Furthermore, "The Spirit said unto Phillip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot;" and the preacher found a heart made ready, fulfilled his mission, and sent a new believer on the way rejoicing after his baptism. Then

"the Spirit of the Lord caught away Phillip, that the eunuch saw him no more," but he was found in other fields with the same gospel of grace. So the Spirit of God led on in his work. The word of the Lord grew mightily, the disciples were greatly multiplied, churches came into being in rapid succession as centers of gospel power and propagation. And the men full of the Holy Spirit were always men of power.

One might plant, another water, but God everywhere gave the increase. Men became then as men become now, co-workers with God, and the Holy Spirit's presence then and now is the one distinguishing mark of those who carry out the work of redemption, whether with the one church or with the one disciple. This was God's plan in offering salvation to the lost, and in building his kingdom among men. The indwelling of the Spirit of God in the church therefore, as its enduement with power from on high, differentiates the church from all other organizations in spiritual character and equipment, as it differs also from all others in its mission and commission among men.

The Third Person in the Godhead, as is manifest throughout the Scriptures, has special and specific part in consummating Christ's work of redemption on the cross. His indwelling in the church is special, his teaching in the church specific. We must not forget his infinite being nor the wider range of his work, nor his sovereignty in the choice of method and means. But now as bearing on the present purpose, we consider his operations on earth, in the hearts and minds

of men, and even more specifically in the church, as having his place of power and personal energy in its organic life and in the administration of its affairs. For in the church at Ephesus the elders were made elders through the Holy Spirit, having their call and appointment from him.

The Temple of the Holy Spirit. The church in this way becomes a storage house of power for giving the gospel to the world, and for saving the lost. This makes the church an organism as well as an organization, and endows it with organific power. A house is an organization, but a structure of dead material, compact and built together in completeness and even beauty, yet itself dead like its brick and mortar, its iron and wood. But the tree wonderful in its organization is also an organism, living, growing, rich in foliage and fruitfulness. The running vine also is an organism, has its leaf and flower, its fragrance and beauty, with the marvelous power of reproducing itself in other vines like itself.

An army is an organization, a Masonic Lodge is an organization, but the church of the living God is something more—it is an organism, having spiritual life, bearing spiritual fruit, reproducing after its kind, and making other churches in building the kingdom of Christ among the nations of the world. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit, wherein the Third Person in the Godhead dwells and works his work of grace, not exclusively, but distinctively and with gracious power; and here he surpasses, if one may dare say so, his work in building and garnishing the heavens in their splen-

dor at midday or their glory in the darkness of the night. To save and sanctify is more than the making of stars, and more than setting the sun in the heavens.

We must hold steadfastly to the great thought, the Spirit of God in the church of God. This comes to us with the emphasis of revelation. It is a mighty factor in the economics of the kingdom. He guides the church in its function of teaching, even in the deep things of God. This is not the work "which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

Having His Abode in the Church. The two letters to the church at Corinth are beautiful and wonderful in their scope of doctrine. They set out with bold and almost startling words the Spirit's place, office and function in the church. They magnify the single church itself in such fashion as would be daring in any other save the words of inspiration, wherein God is showing his walk and grace among men.

"To the church of God at Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints," wrote the great apostle, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are—what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? Ye are the temple [not of dead idols such as the Greeks had but] of the living God; for as God himself hath said, I will dwell in them [as individuals] and walk among them [which the heathen idols could not do], and they shall be my people." (1 Cor. 1: 1, 2; 3: 16, 17; 2 Cor. 6: 16.)

Commenting on these high words, Meyer, one of the ablest and for the most part one of the safest expositors, says:

"The *indwelling* of God in the church as in his temple, and the intercourse of his gracious *rule* (walking about) in it, takes place through the medium of his Spirit. Paul's thought is not that there are several temples of God, but that each Christian community [or church, as we would say] is in a spiritual way a temple of Jehovah, the realized ideal of that temple. There are not, therefore, several temples, but several churches, each of which is the true spiritual temple of God. God as he dwelt in the actual temple, dwells in the ideal temple of the Christian church by the gracious presence, working and ruling in it, of the *Holy Spirit*, in whom God communicates himself. For the Spirit dwells and rules in the hearts of believers [individual believers, but also and especially], the community is the temple."

An Example of Fact and Doctrine. The church of God at Corinth is conspicuous as a typical case among New Testament churches, and is for our instruction now. There was much in its life adverse to this high thought, sometimes to a point of surprise and even painfulness. And yet God, according to his own word, was in them, walking among them and working out his gracious purpose through his Holy Spirit. It was the glory of God in earthen vessels, the beauty and flash of the diamond set in metal common and base. As a concrete case it gives definition and definiteness, illustration and emphasis to the thought of the Spirit of God in the church at Corinth. He had his place in the Corinthian church as distinct personality and power, as God walking and working among them, revealing his glory and saving grace among its

membership, as he showed his presence in the ancient temple. Here it was that Paul saw God in the vision as the glory flashing through, and "continued there a year and six months *teaching the word of God* among them," and his teaching like his preaching "was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." "And many Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."

The same thing appears also in the church at Ephesus, which for that reason was "the house of God, the church of the living God, the ground and pillar of the truth." To that church in whose membership the Holy Spirit administered, and which as a body was set over in contrast with the gorgeous temple of Diana built by the Ephesians in that emporium of Grecian religious art in honor and worship of their goddess, the apostle wrote just as he did to the church at Corinth, in different words somewhat, but with the same thought and meaning.

"Now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ," that he might reconcile both unto God by the cross, for through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a

habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. 2: 13-22.)

As with the church at Ephesus and the church at Corinth, so with the church today, whether in the country or village, town or city. The Holy Spirit in a great sense makes the church, and as the author of inspiration made the Scriptures for the churches, for doctrine and instruction, for reproof, correction and equipment in every good work. The holy men of old spoke for God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and in the church on the day of Pentecost the apostles when swept by the power from on high, spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. Hence, too, the words of our risen Lord, seven times repeated in the letters to the seven church of Asia Minor, Ephesus among the others, "He that hath an ear, let him say what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

THE SPIRIT'S OFFICE AS TEACHER. He works his work with sovereignty as to means and methods. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." So also are all his movements; not with caprice, however, but with the orderliness of the stars which he set in the heavens, and with the majesty and sweep of the storm, but without its roar or devestation. He is in the church for helping the church in the fulfillment of its mission, whether of preaching the gospel or teaching the Scriptures, whether in the administration of its affairs within unto edification of the body, or in its

energies and activities for the furtherance of the gospel and the building of the kingdom.

This indwelling of the Spirit of God in the church of God is something additional to his indwelling with individual believers, and calls for recognition and emphasis as fact and factor in the life of the church. The one makes the brotherhood of believers in all countries, the other makes the sisterhood of churches through all centuries. The two are supplemental, and the Spirit's administration of the church is largely by means of his ministry in the members separately.

With the individual the Spirit does his gracious work unto salvation, with each one severally and distinctly. He brings conviction of sin to the heart, quickens into new life of believing, and makes one a new creature in Christ Jesus; he sanctifies the believer and performs unto the finish the good work he has begun, changing him into the same image of his Lord from glory to glory. So it is that believers in Christ have the witness in themselves, each one for himself as his own blessed experience of grace. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," each one severally. But the Spirit also hath this further and larger administration; he takes the many, possibly greatly deversified in character and condition, even more widely perhaps in race and rank, and makes them, "whether Jew or Gentile, where bond or free," into one body like the church of God at Corinth or Ephesus. By his workmanship they become "the body of Christ" and members in particular, a "building fitly framed together; they grow into a holy

temple of the Lord, and are builded together for an habitation of God"—God in his own workmanship making a house for himself.

Severally they have a common experience of grace, having "been all made to drink into one Spirit," and by the one Spirit also they were fitted for baptism, and were baptized into his name with reference to the one body. The Spirit works with them severally, and in the body as a whole, to unify and electrify, to edify the church as the temple of God, for its efficiency and the consummation of its ideal life and purpose. As in the electric lighting of a house, there are many wires distributed throughout its several parts; then comes the touch of the one dynamo through the one wire, and every wire becomes a living wire, transmitting power and energy which break out, flooding the whole building with light; then under its touch and working might the building is electrified, and its life is in the form of light. The Spirit's presence in the church is the glory of God in the church of God.

The Saviour's Promise to Send the Spirit as Teacher. As the underlying and all pervasive thought of all that is said here, and as expressive of what is written throughout the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit is our Teacher in the teaching service of the church, the aid of the Sunday school teacher in study and exposition. This does not exhaust, but surely lies within the scope of the Saviour's promise to send "the Spirit of truth" as the advocate of truth. His words then are living words now, and should have their place of power and energy in the church today. They make

his people a teaching people, his church a school for education and training in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

As he said to that first group of disciples so he says to us and to the same end: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth." "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "The Spirit of truth shall testify of me." "He shall convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin because they believe not on me." "The Spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth." "He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14: 16, 17, 26; 15: 26; 16: 7, 8, 13, 14.)

In fulfillment of the Saviour's promise, and in answer to his prayer to the Father, the Third Person of the Godhead came as the Spirit of truth, and on the lofty mission as Teacher in the church of God. The Spirit is the guardian of doctrine, our guide in its understanding, and its enforcement in our teaching the Scriptures. It is his pre-eminently to glorify Christ in us, and in our teaching, to show his redemptive work worth while for the need of sinful and ruined hearts, and to make it effective in saving the lost—making them alive in Christ Jesus, holy in character, Christlike in life and service. It is of him to bring conviction of doctrine, both the doctrine of the cross and the doctrines of God our Saviour. It is not of the Spirit of

truth, nor of one under his tutilege and power, to dishonor Jesus Christ, or in any sense deny him his essential Deity, or dismantle him of the insignia of his divinity or his eternal kingship. "Wherefore I give you to understand," said the man who learned through mighty experience of the Lordship of Jesus, who lived and wrought, finished his work and died in its blessed power, "no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit."

Heavenly Connection and Consummation. This is the connection of the church with heaven, and this its mission and equipment as a school of instruction. It is of God, and speaks for God as a preaching agency, also in its teaching, and in all its activities for the kingdom. This high view of church life and endeavor does not outreach the word and warrant of the Scripture. The church has been in operation through centuries, in the fulfillment of God's scheme of redeeming grace and for its consummation in the ages to come. Our Lord during the days of his flesh transferred his residence from heaven to this world, and tabernacled among men. Those who knew him beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. He finished his work in dying on the cross, and rose triumphant from the grave; he committed to the church the evangelizing of the world, and ascended on high, entering again the glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world.

Then in fulfillment of our Lord's promise, the Third

Person of the Godhead, inaugurating the dispensation of the Spirit came in the fullness of power. It was a transfer, so to speak, of his residence to this world, and he took up his abode in the church as "the temple of the living God," for its vitalizing and for its imperial conquest. This greatly magnifies the church in its mission and service for the kingdom of God. It puts the church in communication with heaven, and all its activities in connection with heavenly forces. It makes of the church something of a wireless station which flings out the cry of distress over the distance and darkness, and is answered in the coming of help. We call and God answers; God calls and we answer. This is the establishment of communication between heaven and earth, and the union of human and divine forces in God's own gracious way.

The aid of the Holy Spirit from of old until now comes in answer to prayer. Not a formal saying of prayers, but earnest calling upon God, with diligent searching of the Scriptures and commitment of ourselves to his ways. The church must be considered a school of instruction and education in the ways and deep things of God, his chosen instrument for making the kingdom, and his appointed channel for the outgo of divine energy through human agencies. It bears its commission and promise of success from the throne, and is set in purpose and hope for the final coronation of the King of kings.

So the church local bearing everywhere the divine mark, becomes a mighty factor for the church universal, the general assembly and church of the first

born. And the Sunday school of today as the teaching service and a method of instruction, is one of the forces working to that mighty event. Its teachers will find their fullness of reward in its triumphant consummation. That will be "the glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle or any such thing"—the bride elect, adorned for her husband and made ready for the marriage of the Lamb.

CHAPTER VI.

A SCRIPTURAL PEDAGOGY FOR THIS SCHOOL.

A SCRIPTURAL PEDAGOGY. The Sunday school requires a pedagogy in accord with its mission and purpose, a pedagogy which in principle and method holds itself subject to what the Scriptures teach, and which seeks to make scriptural truth effective in mind and heart. As the science of teaching, pedagogy may yet come to its most commanding opportunity in teaching the Scriptures.

Take, for example, the Master's talk with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus on the morning of the resurrection. He found them lost in disappointment and darkness, going away from the empty sepulchre and the risen Christ. Withholding his identity he interpreted the tragedy of the cross in the light of Scripture, made his appeal to them from the prophets, got in behind their disbelief and darkness, "interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself," opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, how it behooved Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory.

His gracious words were heavenlit, and reached their mark. It was a new day in the world's history, and also in the experience of the two disciples. The recent event took on new meaning in their eyes. Their

hearts burned within them as he opened the Scriptures; their hope came back as if itself risen from the dead; their sadness was turned into joy; they hastened in return to Jerusalem with the world's new message, saying, they had seen the Lord, and he had talked with them in the way. This was high scriptural pedagogy, and Jesus was the master pedagogist, for he knew the Scriptures, and knew what was in man, and needed not that any should tell him. He set the Scriptures within the human heart, and the heart grew warm with new life and hope.

An Effort at Definition. I say effort, partly from a sense of inadequacy, but partly because when we come into the realm of thinking, and into that deeper realm we call feeling, where mind operates on mind, and spirit moves on spirit, definition is never easy, and sometimes well nigh impossible.

> "Below the surface stream, shallow and light,
> Of what we *say* we feel, below the stream,
> As light, of what we *think* we feel; there flows,
> With noiseless current, strong, obscure, and deep,
> The central stream of what *we feel indeed.*"

The most philosophical operation perhaps within the human soul is when the Spirit of God "bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God"—Spirit calling to spirit, our spirit answering to his Spirit—his begetting anew and his call, my child, with the answer, Abba Father. Then follows the glorious consciousness of sonship and joint heirship. There is nothing deeper than this, nothing higher, nothing more simple or real, nothing more rapturous or mysterious.

The man knows simply because he has the witness within himself, knows of the onward sweep and rush of joy in a new found life and hope.

In this sphere of human experience it is not easy to define the laws of mental movement. And yet much has been done to discern and define their course. Pedagogy is educational psychology; it applies the facts of psychology in the process of teaching, with reference for the most part to educating the child. Scriptural pedagogy is the use of educational psychology in teaching Scripture truth with Scripture aim and purpose. All teaching must have ethical aim, all religious teaching must have religious aim. It is not the office of psychology in either case to choose that aim, but to discover and furnish the tools for its onward working and consummation. The Scriptures rather set the aim in "the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Pedagogy in the Sunday school, distinguished from its working elsewhere, must hold steadfastly to the threefold purpose to study, to teach, to learn the holy Scriptures, with the Scripture aim to know God and his Son, Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, and whom to know aright is life eternal. Scripture knowledge is the knowledge of knowing God; this is primal and basal, all else must contribute to this. Surely the high art of teaching never contemplated a nobler purpose nor set itself to a task more inviting or of more thrilling inspiration.

STANDING WITHIN THE HOLY OF HOLIES. Psychology is the study of the human mind, as Botany is

a study of the flowers, and Astronomy a study of the stars. "The undevout astronomer is mad," and even more the undevout psychologist. "The further I go," said Newton, in the mighty sweep of his thought, "the further I go, the more do I find traces of the divine workmanship, and the nearer do I come to his throne." Another master in the realm of thinking said: "Two things fill me with awe, the starry heaven above, and my soul within me." The wonders of the human mind with its manifest limits and its immense capacity for vast outreach, far surpass the wonders of the stars, whether in material, mechanism, or movement.

All the glory of the heavenly bodies do not equal the glory of thinking, of knowing, of loving. In the presence of either we stand uncovered and overawed at what God hath wrought. The more intelligent we are, the deeper our sense of awe and wonder, and the more devout should we be in our worship at this alter. The heavens declare the glory of God, but the human mind finds his mercy fresh every morning, and also his creative energy and his preserving power. And catching the song which the angels sing, we worship him in spirit and in truth; worship him in the beauty of holiness, toward his holy temple where his name is written and his glory dwells; worship him, "who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders."

A Pedagogy to Match the Office. To bring the Scripture and the human mind together so as to get their affinity one for the other, is the work of the Sunday school teacher. This is his office, his function, his crowding and crowning task. We see, therefore,

that the Sunday school, being distinct throughout, as to pupil and teacher, as to lesson study, environment and purpose, requires a pedagogy to match. In one sense, of course, there is only one pedagogy, whether for this school or for the secular school, but Sunday school pedagogy must so apply the laws of teaching as to meet Sunday school conditions. Carelessness here is criminal, and failure of the truth here may be fatal in the most momentous of all issues.

Pedagogy or psychology turned to educational account in the Sunday school, must be scriptural in a threefold sense: (1) In the sense of teaching scriptural truth, and holding to the one purpose of the school to teach the Scriptures as the word of God; (2) in the sense of recognizing and taking account of the religious nature and spiritual need of the pupil, as taught in the Scriptures, whether child or adult; (3) in the sense of meeting that need, as provided in the Scriptures by the atonement of Christ made in shedding his blood on the cross, that God might be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus.

The child is religious by nature, but *becomes* a child of God by grace through faith; is born by natural birth into the kingdom of nature, but only by spiritual birth is he born into the spiritual kingdom; and so *becomes* a member of the heavenly family and of the household of faith, heir of God, and joint heir with Christ. Whether child or adult, there is no difference in this matter; each *becomes* a Christian, not by education and culture, but by regeneration. We *become* the children of God in being born of God through faith in

Jesus Christ, and the love of God is shed abroad (from above and from without) in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which he has given unto us.

Pedagogy needs to walk humbly here, and in the light of Scripture. Failing at this crucial juncture it is inadequate for Sunday school teaching, may go astray in violating the truth of God and in endangering the soul's highest interest. Even Sunday school pedagogy, which should be of highest character, is at best only a tool for workmanship, and all at last depends on the teacher who has it in hand for use. The surgeon's knife is one thing, and should be of the fittest, but the surgeon himself is the chief factor, with his skill in diagnosis, his delicate and masterful touch in operating.

In this school, therefore, we need a scriptural pedagogy with scriptural teachers, trained in heart by the Spirit of God, and in mind for discerning and doing the work of the Spirit—teachers as co-workers with God in God's truth and in God's kingdom of grace, for meeting the deepest needs of the human heart, whether of child or adult.

For the Adult as Well as the Child. We would not slacken our study of child nature, but would urge all diligence and care in meeting the needs of its unfolding wonder. The child as a diamond may come to shine as a diadem in honor of the King if saved through the blood of the cross. We need to realize that Sunday school pedagogy, or educational psychology, so far as it applies to this school, must make provision for dealing with the adult mind. For while

holding the child as its ward for the kingdom, the Sunday school is coming more and more to commanding place among those who have come to years. Men everywhere are finding in it an opportunity for spiritual culture and wide usefulness, with the Scriptures as the fittest thing for their study, and as meeting their deepest need. Psychology if it shall serve in the kingdom of God must not part company with his word, and must provide for teaching the Scriptures to those of mature years.

Our Lord dealt almost exclusively with the adult mind, and in every stage of training or want of training, and in every stratem of human society and social life. So with his disciples who took up his work after him. The Scriptures were the basis of their hope, and the subject of their teaching. Their work was with adults; and the conquests of the cross were made among men and women, some of its richest trophies coming from the slums and other unexpected quarters then as now. This in nowise is to the disparagement of children or childhood, but emphasizes a phase of Sunday school pedagogy which has scarcely found recognition among us, and certainly has not been accorded its rank and power. Is it not possible to go too far, that we have gone too far already in singling out and distinguishing any period of human life as "the conversion period?" The gospel of the grace of God is for the lost, child and adult alike, and is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Child Mind and Adult Mind. But after all, do the facts require or even warrant the difference and dis-

tinction, which some claim, as between childhood and manhood? Certainly the Scriptures make no difference between them as to their spiritual need, or as to the process of their coming into the grace and kingdom of God. If the child be not lost as to his spiritual condition, then Christ is not the child's Saviour. He came to call sinners to repentance, to seek and save the lost, whether child or adult. So run the provisions of grace and his saving power, and there must be no abridgement in our teaching.

Those dying in infancy, we are happy in believing, are saved and people the heavenly city. Not, however, through any holiness or inherited covenant relation, but through the provision which God has made in the atonement. They are "safe in the arms of Jesus," and like others sweep through the gates of the new Jerusalem washed in the blood of the cross, and sing with the redeemed the song of Moses and the Lamb.

In this matter, however, of adults and children, I am not writing of infants, but of those having come to years of accountability, whenever that is. Unlike the adult in sinning, yet like him in the sinfulness of his nature, the child is also lost, and in need of being saved through the redemption that is in Christ, and through the quickening and renewing work of the Holy Spirit. Child and adult alike need to come to repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and each one for himself in his own individual act.

Educational Psychology. This scriptural view of the common need and common process of child and adult is fundamental, and in accord with the scientific

thought in the study of child nature. Even from the standpoint of psychology and pedagogy, a difference in years makes no such difference in mental condition and process, as is claimed by some. In his Psychology of Thinking, Professor Miller, of Wisconsin Normal School, emphasizes the "Unity and continuity of the mind;" that the one mind persists through all the stages of childhood, youth and adolescence, coming to manhood with unbroken continuity in identity and individuality; that the mind is the same through all the stages, only there is enlargement in growth and development; and that the mind, each one in itself, is one, not having many faculties, but in its oneness functioning in many and wonderful ways—as in memory or will, in intellect, imagination or feeling. He cautions us, too, against going too far in distinguishing between the child mind and the adult mind, especially the untrained mind of the adult.

Differences there are, of course, in development, but not in the minds inherent capacity to function nor in the process of functioning. Mind is mind, remembering is remembering, no matter in what degree or whether of adult or child. A giant or a child may pick up a toy, but the toy is the same and the process of picking it up is the same. A child or philosopher may love or hope or believe, and the process is the same with child and philosopher. God knows the way to the human heart, and the process of the human mind; and whether adult or child, whether with trained or untrained mind, one believes in Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and has the privilege of becoming the son

of God. They are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, being made willing through his Spirit in the day of his power.

APPREHENSION OF SPIRITUAL TRUTH. To learn of God, to know and worship him—the apprehension of spiritual truth—is a distinct quality of the human mind, and separates as by a great gulf between man and the rest of the animal creation. It is inherent, and not a question of how old or how young; is of the child mind, and of the adult mind, trained and untrained alike; it is not a matter of culture or training, and yet is itself capable of the largest culture. Speaking after the manner of psychology, the human mind functions in religion, as well as in memory or will, seeking and calling for God, hearing and answering the call which God makes.

"There is something in man; something, call it what you may, that sees the invisible, feels the intangible, hears the inaudible," and this is true with both the child and the adult, whether trained or untrained. For example, when Moses endured as seeing him who is invisible; as when Samuel heard God's call in the night, and Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child; or as Jesus at the well met the woman of Samaria, altogether untrained and with her moral sense well night dead, yet gave her the most tremendous facts and spoke to her the most metaphysical word that ever fell from his lips—if one may dare distinguish between his wonderful words: "God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship in spirit and truth." Ah,

we know not how much the untrained and sinful women apprehended the great truth, but it made her forget her water pot and her thirst for the water of the well, gave her a new life and light within, a new message for the city. We underestimate the capacity of the untrained adult, and also of the child for the deep things of God, and for the wonders of redemption. They discern in surprising quickness and fullness the sin within and the abundant mercy of God, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened.

If psychology fail to discern this basal and essential quality of the human mind, we seem to be coming upon mental materialism, and moral sense seems to be merging into matter. If pedagogy take no account of these facts, and fail to meet these needs and calls for help, then there is failure at the crucial and critical point, and darkness where light is most needed—direful failure to discern the deep things of God and man. Not to teach the Scriptures or to be unscriptural in this school for teaching the Scripture in its relation to the most momentous issues of the human soul, is to be unpedagogical; and educational psychology comes short at the point of the golden crown for its own coronation as a noble and exact science.

For Teachers Untrained in Pedagogy. Meanwhile there is need for a word of caution and encouragement; of caution on the one hand because there is danger of too much ado in some quarters as to the value and function of pedagogy in Sunday school teaching; of encouragement, on the other hand, lest those teachers lose hope who have had no training in scien-

tific teaching—possibly no technical training at all for their holy and august work. In the Sunday school there is need for heart training, which out of all compare is the chief thing, and which has wrought wonders in the absence of psychological education. This should be magnified, though of course not to disparage the highest and best training or as being inconsistent with the technique of the art.

Psychology in its new phases and theory, according to Professor Munsterberg, of Harvard, dates back only to the early sixties, and pedagogy or psychology applied to educational processes, is yet well inside its first decade. While the learned professor writes as a master magnifying his art, yet he is beautifully modest and cautious; he assures us that psychology has not come to its full, and much less pedagogy. Much of value has been done, but he reminds those who are bold over much that there are vast fields yet unexplored, and even a lack of certainty in much of what is claimed.

Psychology may yet give us a more certain word and a better pedagogy, but it is rash to demand them as indispensable to this school, and more than rash to demand that we quadrate the Scriptures with what is taught in these departments of learning, since they are still unsettled and problematic. For without their agency, and before their discovery wonders have been wrought for the kingdom of God among men, both in teaching and preaching. Better have the Scriptures in its saving power without psychology, than psychology even at its best without the Scriptures.

Promises More for the Future. And yet this comparison must now be set down as adverse to a noble science, or what may yet become a noble science. For educational psychology may yet render great service in the domain of mind, and open vast possibilities in showing us wondrous things out of God's written law. The sum of the matter, therefore, is: Let psychology and pedagogy be accorded their place of rank even in Sunday school teaching, not as opposing, but as serving God's word. There is room and need for the devout student in this field of research, where he works among the mysteries of mind and heart, and is coming all the while nearer to where God's throne is.

But meantime it is worth while to remember and recount what has been wrought without technical training, by the almost countless Sunday school workers today and back in former years, and even former centuries. It becomes us like Moses before the burning bush to stand uncovered in modest recognition of this one mighty fact. We mark with enthusiasm the onward march of the kingdom of Christ, and that it pleased God oftentimes to set at naught the wisdom of the wise; and that his kingdom comes not by the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Crowns of glory await the teachers in this school who turn many to righteousness. They shall shine as the stars forever and ever; they shall hold their rank among the heavenly hosts which live and reign beyond where the stars are shining.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TEACHER'S VISION OF GOD.

MADE READY IN HEART. The Sunday school teacher, as viewed throughout these pages, requires spiritual qualification as heart equipment. His teaching, while it must be teaching as measured by the rules of the schoolroom, must also be spiritual in character, so as to meet its purpose and aim. This requirement relates to his own experience of grace, to his experiential conception of truth, to his study of the Scriptures and preparation for teaching. Having this experience for himself will give tone to all his bearing in the class, and will flavor all his methods of instruction. This outflow of spiritual life in thought and discernment, may move with distinctive power, and yet move in well-appointed channels on schedule lines. God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, but never haphazard or without order either in nature or grace.

"God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." So he works in nature, and so also in the kingdom of his grace. This is for each teacher, one by one and each one for himself. A person needs to preserve his own individuality, and a consecrated in-

dividuality is always an element of might and efficiency in mastering a task. What is presented here for Sunday school teachers may be counted an ideal, even a high and far-away ideal, and yet it is a real need and possible attainment—at least in a measure, but an ever-increasing measure. It is an ideal surely worth working for, and must be kept in mind by the teacher in maintaining for himself a high standard in spirit and purpose. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not."

Such teachers in the pastor's college of teachers will give tone to the school, character and dignity to the curriculum, fitness and efficiency in the method of instruction. This spiritual equipment finds apt and adequate expression in the title of this chapter—the teacher's vision of God. It is needed in teaching all grades, in dealing with the adult and the child mind, even the youngest. It is needed in every lesson, both in preparation and when the teacher meets the class face to face, mind to mind for teaching. The teacher who has not seen God in spiritual vision will never see the pupil's heart or the deeper and richer meaning of the sacred Scriptures. For him there will be failure, and he will fall short at the vital point and in the crucial moment. It is only the vision of God for oneself that can give the right spirit in teaching, the spirit so indefinable and yet so indispensable for great work and high ends.

Oftentimes the spirit of teaching is more powerful than either its method or substance, not more important perhaps, but more powerful and effective. It is what may be called the atmosphere of the school-

room or class, or of the teacher with his scholars, and carries the elements of life and of life-giving efficacy. Such teachers almost by spiritual instinct and affinity, will grade their teaching, make it suitable to age and condition, finding the point of contact between pupil and Scripture, and matching truth to mind and heart. These are the teachers who are masterful and kingly in the kingdom of spiritual schooling. Neither teacher nor pupil is conscious of the outgo of spiritual virtue in teaching—the one giving it out, the other feeling its subtle power. The mind of child and adult alike is susceptible, and yielding readily to this influence, is made ready like soil for the coming of the seed.

How it Comes. This is not easily told, but it comes as the sunlight of the morning comes. Lo, it is here, and there is life and light, warmth and a kindling effect. Dr. Edward Everett Hale, when telling of the working of his own mind in an experience of grace, of the call he received from Christ to service under the preaching of a man sent of God, makes the remark, that he saw the change coming, saw it come and work other changes within and without, but that he did not try to explain at the time or afterward. So with every one who is born of the Spirit, regardless of age, of social condition, or of culture in the school. Not even one skilled in mind study and trained in the ways of learning can tell the coming of the Spirit of God, whether like the evening zephyr among the flowers, or like the storm among the mighty oaks of the forest. And what of it, so the Spirit comes, bears witness with our spirit, works his work, and we have teachers who

teach in the spirit and power which he gives? That is heavenly kinship in the service of the King, and makes way for the coming of God's kingdom in the hearts of men.

When God elected in the Old Testament time to make of Isaiah a flaming prophet, somewhat like John the Baptist, he appeared to him in a vision of overpowering splendor as he waited in the temple. The man in the glory which God's presence brings was brought face to face with himself, with the sin of his heart, with himself in comparison with the holiness of Jehovah, as seen in the splendor of the throne and heard in the song which the seraphim sang. Isaiah tells of it himself, as he saw and felt it, much like Saul of Tarsus in later times of the New Testament. He locates it as to date and place, tells what it wrought for him in his inmost soul, how it brought to him a new life from on high, opened to him a new work, and sent him forth with a mission and message from God. From that time forward he went as a man sent of God, speaking the word of the Lord as he would have him speak. Isaiah is counted the gospel preacher of the Old Testament times, and centuries before his advent preached Christ crucified but triumphant in coronation glory.

"In the year that King Uzziah died," is the way the prophet tells of his vision, "I saw the Lord sitting upon the throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said: Holy,

Holy, Holy, is Jehovah of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundation of the threshold trembled at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

"Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim having a live coal in his hands, which he had taken with the tongs from the altar; and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin is forgiven.

"And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I, send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people."

The man came out from God with a personal touch, personal experience, personal call, having dealt with God for himself, and having in his own soul the imprimatur of heaven. Those whom God sends are bearers of his message. In the Old Testament it was, Go and tell; in the New Testament it is, Go, preach, make disciples, baptizing them, teaching them. This is the commission of all who bear the message of grace and tell the good news of salvation.

PROPHETS AND PREACHERS. As the derivation of the word indicates, prophets are those who speak for or in behalf of others. The ancient prophets were first speakers for God, and then under his special message and power became tellers of future events. Holy men of old spoke for God as they were moved by his Holy Spirit, and they came speaking the word of God, and the word which he bade them speak. The closing of the Old Testament witnessed the passing of the prophets and of the prophetic office; the opening of the New

Testament witnessed the coming of the preacher and the ministry of preaching. The one told of a Saviour to come, of a child to be born, of a Messiah to be sent of God, while the other came telling of the Messiah having come as the Saviour of the world, as the Son of God, full of grace and truth, and men beheld his glory.

The message had changed in tense, but not in substance; in form, but not in meaning. It was the same, but with enlargement, clearness and enrichment; in the same spirit with the same great and glorious end. God had changed his messengers, but not his message, except in its great reach of revealed grace and saving power. He had come nearer to men in Christ crucified, but risen for the redemption of the world. The New Testament preacher was the successor of the Old Testament prophet, if not in office and line of succession, yet by the passing of years and in the ministry of the word, and in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

They had much in common. Isaiah and Paul for example—what mighty men of God they were, a flaming fire each of them, unconquerable each in his mission and in meeting the issues for the onward going of the kingdom of God. Separated by nearly a thousand years, they were yet of kindred mind, spirit and purpose. Prophets were called to be prophets by the word of the Lord, and preachers are called to be preachers by the Holy Spirit of God working in their hearts the special work of the ministry. They are men sent of God—always men sent of God if they are real preachers of grace.

WHAT THE VISION MEANT. This is the significance of Isaiah's vision in the temple. Like the vision of Saul of Tarsus going to Damascus, it had somewhat of the extraordinary and supernatural, and of what was peculiar to itself and its times, but its essential and basal elements were such as come in God's dealing with the soul, and is the same always and everywhere. What the prophet saw of God, what he heard as coming from the throne, what he received in the touch of the burning coal from off the altar, what he said when offering himself in life and service in answer to God's call—these are the mighty things which are repeated in human hearts whenever moved upon by the power of God's Spirit. And this it is which makes the experience of grace, and opens to one a new life with a new mission and message.

To see the King in his glory, to have a heart's vision of the Lord of hosts, has never lost its power. It awakens the song which the seraphim sing, creates that sense of awe in the presence of God's holiness and greatness which made them hide the face, cover the feet, and hold themselves ready for swiftness of message. To see God in nature, to see God in the wonders of his providence, to see God in his written word with its pages aflame with his glory—all this is great, very great. But far greater is it to see God in the heart with such vision as brings a sense of sin with its confession, as brings the sense of mercy and pardon, with cleansing fresh from God's gracious hand. This is something different and deeper, richer, more definite, more powerful, and fixes one forever in the service of

the King. This is what makes men and women the children of God for his care and the servants of God for his service and honor.

PREACHERS AND TEACHERS. This, too, is the first and essential qualification in making preachers and teachers, and the one basal need in preaching and teaching—the one chord of the heart from which there must be no broken or discordant note. Those whom God has touched, in whose heart he has wrought his work of grace, and his further work of call to service, have something to tell, and will not be hushed in their song or story.

There is manifestly a difference between preacher and teacher, between preaching and teaching, in the New Testament usage of these terms. There is no hard and fast line between them which can be easily marked and defined, and yet there is a difference. God set some in the church to be preachers, and some to be teachers; our Lord was both preacher and teacher, for he went about "teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom," and he sent his disciples to preach the gospel, making other disciples, and then teaching them. Paul was sometimes a preacher and preached, sometimes a teacher and taught the word of God.

EQUIPMENT OF HEART. Differ as they may in some things, and in their specific training for specific work, they yet have the common need of spiritual qualification through their personal vision of God—in the fullness of its meaning which gives enlargement, equipment and enrichment.

For the present our purpose is to insist upon this as the heart equipment of the teacher for teaching. Each one must have his own vision of God—*the teacher's vision of God,* seeing and hearing, calling and answering for himself. This opens the way for rapturous service and triumphant efficiency. There can be no device or substitute for this. The man who teaches Greek must have Greek. All the Latin or mathematics would not answer for that service. The teacher who bears the message of grace must have grace in the heart as his own blessed experience. He will need this in preparing his lesson for next Sunday, and when making that larger and more general preparation for his work, and when he comes to his class in teaching. He will need it also as he touches the heart and mind of his pupil, as he speaks for God and makes known his message of grace. This spiritual qualification as the basal need for the teacher, must be always in mind as a thing settled, when we talk of training teachers. If we are to make marble statuary and monumental shafts, we must first have the marble; if our work is in bronze, we must first have the bronze; if in clay, we must first have the clay; if in gold and diamond, we must first have the precious metal and the more precious stone. If we are to train teachers and fit them for the mighty task and high art of teaching God's word and dealing with human souls, we must have those who for themselves have seen God and been taught of him.

With this provided, there is open to teachers, whether in his training or teaching, the whole wide field of

learning and literature, culture and schooling in the technique of the teacher's art. This surely makes all subsidiary to his getting and giving truth—making grace the adornment of culture, and culture the instrument of grace for high workmanship in the kingdom. But let there be no mistake about this vital matter, and let there be no reversal of this order. Culture, learning and training are of immense value, and nothing must be said which can in any wise be a disparagement of their merit and need; but they cannot take the place of heart equipment in its vision of God; yet they may greatly augment the efficiency and outworking of the spiritual qualification. We cannot make the soft stone of the quarry do the work or bear the workmanship of marble or granite.

It is imperative and vital that this distinction be maintained, and that these qualifications spiritual and cultivated, all of which are of value and useful in their order, shall be kept properly adjusted in their relation to each other, and to the teacher in his being trained and in his teaching. When God's work has gone before, then the best of training may follow, and should follow. Not that God's work can be improved, but that we may the better use the energies created within by his grace, and the better fulfill the mission to which he sends us.

The Mission and the Message. This is the outcome of the vision, and sets an open door for the teacher who has seen God and heard his gracious word, even as it did for the prophet or as it does now for the preacher. Such experience and equipment for one's

mission and message is never out of time, but rather like God, its gracious author, is without date. *Who will go for us?* is ever the call coming out from God, and may be heard everywhere by men and women. *Here am I, send me;* is the answer ever given back by those who have seen the King in his glory, experienced his grace, and heard his call for service. What can I do for God? is the most momentous, masterful and triumphant question that can rise in the human heart.

This was the purpose of touching the prophet's lips with a living coal of fire from off the altar, and the cleansing of the lips and life. He never let the fire go out in his heart, but with that fire burning like a flame on his lips, he made men everywhere feel that he had been with God, learned of him, had been sent on his mission and with his message. The man sent of God, whether in the office as prophet, or the ministry of preaching, or as teacher, bears in himself with [illegible] announcement, the insignia of his mission and the badge of his commission. For the man speaking from God, and in the power of his Spirit, is one whom the people hear and acknowledge, though they do not always heed his message.

The sum and conclusion of the whole matter is this, if we are to do anything for God, then first of all God must do something with us, and we with him. To have seen God in the temple is to find the way and walk of life. This is the fundamental need and mightiest factor in all Sunday school teaching, and lifts it to a plane of highest worth and commanding character. A vision of God for the teacher will mean a vision of

God for the school with the incoming of his Spirit. Instruments in his hand are always instruments of might and efficiency.

The products of the school in the church of God are the products of the teacher, and its fruitage is the fruitage which comes from his labor. The teacher sent from God on his mission and with his message, will produce after his kind and possibly beyond what he himself is. Out of his class will come preachers, missionaries, and other teachers, who will gladden and make golden the coming years. To have seen God in the temple is to throw a vision of glory over class work and school work, with new meaning and movement in our efforts for the King and his kingdom.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PASTOR AND HIS COLLEGE OF TEACHERS.

TEACHERS, PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE. The pastor and the pastor's office are of high rank; the office is of God, the man is the Lord's anointed. There is something momentous and august in having care of the church of Christ. The pastorate is the first position in the church, an essential part in its organic life and equipment for fulfilling its mission. It may be thought of as obligation or opportunity; the obligation may bring a sense of burden and anxiety, but the opportunity, like an open door from the Lord, will give outlook and awaken music in the heart. Thinking of its responsibility one feels, "Who is sufficient?" Contemplating the open door gives the feeling of subdued joy: "I thank Christ Jesus, my Lord, that he hath enabled me, and counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."

The pastor's Sunday school is a strategic place for efficiency in his church work, and the teacher is his strategic point in the school for making it effective in all departments, and for carrying its power into all other lines of his work. This is true of the teachers already engaged in teaching, and those to be enlisted in future service, all of whom the pastor may have in training as his college of teachers, for present and

prospective service. Leadership with the teachers for their instruction and imbuement with the Master's spirit, for directing their efforts along right lines and well-chosen methods, is to have the leadership of the Sunday school forces in his church—a very crown of glory to the pastor. He and they alike are set for magnifying the word of the Lord, for augmenting and multiplying the forces which make for his kingdom.

Old Testament Emphasis and Illustration. The teaching of God's word was a mighty factor in Hebrew history. Speaking to the people as God's chosen messenger, and as one especially inspired for the service,

"Moses wrote this law, and delivered unto the priests, the sons of Levi which bore the ark, the covenant of the Lord, and unto all Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying at the end of every seven years in solemnity of the year of release, in the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord, thy God, in the place which ye shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

"Gather the people together, men, women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God and observe to do all this law; and that their children which have not known anything, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God." (Deut. 31: 9-13.)

This was special instruction in addition to regular and more frequent instruction out of God's word for making a God-fearing people. A God-fearing people is the life, strength and prosperity of any nation. Centuries later when Israel, having departed from the law and worship of God, and as a result having been carried away into captivity, were brought back to their

homeland laid waste and desolate, that people were called again to hear the word of the Lord.

"And all the people gathered themselves together as one man in the streets before the water-gate, and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel; and Ezra the scribe brought the law before the congregation both of men and women and all that could hear with understanding upon the first of the seventh month. And he read therein from morning unto midday. . . . And the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

"And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; . . . and when he opened it all the people stood up; and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up of their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. . . . So they read in the book, in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." (Neh. 8: 1-8.)

So the word of the Lord was the one powerful instrument in God's hands, whether in making and molding a people into a nation as at the first, or in rallying and restoring them to their lost prestige in national life and glory. As it was in the days of old with the Hebrew people, so it is now in the life of any people. No factor contributes so effectually to making a God-fearing people as the faithful teaching of his word. In the church the pastor is the leader in teaching and a consequent blessing of wonderful richness in a nation's life.

The Pastor a New Testament Creation. The church with its pastor or bishop, is of the new dispensation, came as the product of the coming of Christ,

and is of his appointment. It was the organized embodiment and expression of his purpose to save the world—the church at Jerusalem being the first church, and its pastor, the brother of our Lord, being the first pastor.

An English writer, treating recently of a great and vital subject, said: "We have found Christ nobly careless of Church organization." But that cannot be true; the statement contravenes everything we know of our Lord as presented in the New Testament. His living was like a consuming fire in zeal and earnestness. He was not careless in anything, but lived and wrought and died in making his church. There was no ado about it in mere words, but through his teaching and training, with great care and diligence he made what he wanted, set it as the organic expression of his kingdom, as the center and custodian of his interest among men.

He gathered to himself a little group as his inner circle, choosing and calling them one at a time; spent three years with them prior to his death, and forty days following the resurrection with even greater concentration of training, drilling, teaching them the things pertaining to the kingdom. All the while he was moving toward the one end of molding the several into one—to have something, call it what you may, whether body or church or organization, but something in which several persons are molded into one—made ready for the day of Pentecost and the coming of the Spirit as the induement with power from on high.

This something of organic form and life had in it

the thought of our Lord, his wisdom, his teaching and training, his life and heart. And this something emerged as the church with new equipment and enlargement of vision, in the enthusiasm of a new zeal and purpose, endowed with reproductive power which at once began reproducing other churches after its kind. In all this where our Lord was at work there was no trace of his being "nobly careless," but rather everywhere earnest and using the most diligent care as to the agency for making the kingdom of God. This same English writer himself, as if catching somewhat of the truer vision, and noting the working and wreckage of history, makes the ringing statement: "By the uprise of denominations God has needed repeatedly to protest the supremacy of the Scriptures, the Lordship of Jesus, the empire of conscience, and the sanctity of the single or local church."

"The Sanctity of the Single Church." This was Christ's organization, the embodiment of his thought, the expressed channel for the output of his energy. It had the minimum of machinery, the maximum of possible efficiency and power. There was no carelessness in its making, and he with diligent care, and by his own chosen means through the ages to this good day, has preserved its rank and maintained its original purpose, and still holds it for the fulfillment of its mission. Through the intervening centuries, as this writer intimates, there have been corruptions in church form and organization, in doctrine and ordinance, in its purpose of administration, and yet the church is still here, as the family is still here being of

divine origin and preservation from Eden until now. The "sanctity of the single church" remains, more or less marred perhaps, but still here, and declaring for "the supremacy of the Scriptures, the empire of conscience, and the Lordship of Jesus."

The pastor also is still here, the chosen and appointed instrument of Christ for preaching and teaching his word, and otherwise administering the affairs of the church for the furtherance of the gospel of the kingdom. There is urgent need to get this view afresh of the man and his office, to recognize and emphasize his vital worth in the organic life of the church in his threefold ministry as preacher, evangelist and teacher of the things of the kingdom. The prophet of the Old Testament has his duplicate, not only in the preacher of the New Testament, but also in the pastor of the church as a man chosen and called of God, and commissioned to high office in his service among men. But there is more definiteness and compactness of organization, with enlargement and concentration of effort in what is committed to the pastor's care.

The Pastor as Teacher. His office is many sided, his ministry manifold. In magnifying the pastor's office and function of teaching, there is no intention to abridge either the privilege or obligation of members in the church, through whose choice he comes to his high office. These are forces that work in oneness in bringing things to pass. The pastor is among them as one who serves, ministering unto them out of God's word, an example in character and every good work, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour.

The layman indeed finds in the Sunday school of today his own large opportunity with the pastor as leader and helper. Here he finds the means of culture in Christian character, and training for service in the cause of Christ—the means of church culture, with large possibilities for using the best that he has, and many avenues for showing his own membership worth while for himself and others, for God and the community. The achievements of the pastor come through the co-operation of his laymen; while back of every great laymen, and the things which are done by him, is the work of some faithful man of God as pastor or preacher.

Something like this was said in an address before an audience which crowded to the utmost a large auditorium. The speaker by way of illustration mentioned by name one of the great merchants of the world, who is devout, earnest and active in the service of God, and ventured the remark almost as a guess, that no doubt this man somewhere in the past came under the touch of a pastor. At the close of the address a man of modest way rose in the audience, and told in simple fashion, but so as to greatly move the vast throng, how years before as pastor of a little country or village church, he himself had led this merchant when a young man to the Saviour, and had baptized him in the name of the Lord.

Another case is recalled. A magnificent school building for young ladies was completely destroyed by fire. A man of large wealth came to the rescue, housed and cared for the school, and then gave his services

and large sums of money for rebuilding. It was an act of signal and conspicuous achievement, and his praises went abroad. But this man years before as a very poor boy in his shirt-sleeves was received by the pastor with others as church members, but no one dreamed of the coming man or of the mighty work being done by the pastor for coming years. The great admiral who commanded the American fleet at Manila, afterward commended the captains of his several men-of-war as being the chieftains in that wonderful naval victory. But all the world crowned with honor and distinction the great admiral himself who commanded the mighty ships and directed their movements in the manœuvres of battle.

The New Testament View. The achievements in a church for the kingdom of God, and for blessing the world, come through pastor and people working together—planting and watering, and God giving the increase. The pastor's work is not confined to teaching, however important and exalted that may be, nor his teaching to the Sunday school or his College of Teachers. The New Testament emphasizes his office and function of both preaching and teaching. His Lord before him as the Bishop of our souls, and, as already shown, was both preacher and teacher, the one supplementing the other. Paul said of himself: "I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher." "God hath manifested his word through preaching which he hath committed unto me, according to the commandments of God our Saviour." "I magnify

mine office." "Our sufficiency is of God, who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament."

We have never accorded to teaching as a pastoral function the high rank which it has in the New Testament, and this has been a point of weakness in church life and efficiency. It can be no rival or substitute for preaching, as bread and water have no conflict in feeding the body. They are supplemental, working each in its own way, and co-operating to one great end. The fear is sometimes expressed that the pulpit will lose its power and preaching its place. *But never,* so long as human hearts are human hearts, sin is sin, and sorrow is sorrow; *never,* so long as God's invitation of mercy and grace remains, and there is a genuine preacher of a genuine gospel. The pulpit has its own peculiar power, and nothing under God's stars can take its place.

A New Emphasis on Teaching. This school of the church is the pastor's school, gives new meaning and opportunity in his ministry and places new emphasis upon teaching as a function of his office. This is going back to the Book, assigns to teaching the rank which it had at the first, is a return to Christ's method and appointment. The pastor, as the man of God called into the ministry, has the "care of the church of God." As bishop he must be "apt to teach," is admonished to show "himself a good minister of Jesus Christ," and "to make full proof of his ministry." As preacher, he preaches the gospel; as teacher, he teaches the doctrine—"sound doctrine, according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God."

The apostle therefore, when writing to Timothy, bishop of the church at Ephesus, and Titus, bishop of the church at Crete, puts emphasis with much earnestness upon the personal character and manner of life, upon their preaching and teaching, and upon doctrine which is the substance of teaching. His words are burning words, and to this day are incandescent with the glow of his heart: "Give heed to reading, to exhortation, *to teaching*." "In doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity." "Doctrine according to godliness." "The same commit thou unto faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." "Give diligence to show thyself approved unto God, a workman not to be shamed, handling aright the word of truth." "These things command and teach." "O Timothy, guard that which is committed to thy trust."

Every injunction on the pastor to teach is an injunction bearing the heavenly imprint, *to teach the word of God*. He may have all learning at his command, all literature, all nature and art, for illustration and improvement, but nothing to supercede or encroach on the Scriptures as the subject of his preaching and teaching. This greatest preacher of the cross the world ever saw, while admonishing two young pastors of his times, gave in himself without boasting a commanding example for all pastors, who would make full proof of their ministry and show themselves able ministers of the New Testament.

For in the church of God at Corinth, Paul spent "a year and six months teaching the word of God among them." Likewise in the church at Ephesus, as he re-

cities to the elders who came down to meet him at Miletus: "By the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." "Among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God." "And have taught publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

Teaching Those Who Teach. That is what Paul did, multiplying himself in others as a wise master builder; that is what our Lord himself did in the Apostolic College as his inner circle, teaching them his doctrine and giving them his message, that they might teach others, sending them forth to preach and teach the gospel of his kingdom, as he himself was doing. So the pastor may do in his church, and with his College of Teachers, multiply himself in them, and augment his force and reaching power as teacher of the things concerning the kingdom. The pastor, as the man of God, "has his throne in the hearts of his people," said a successful pastor of a great church, but in the pulpit for preaching is where he reigns, and in his College of Teachers for teaching he finds his place of dominion, and through them in the open school and throughout the community.

The first man in all the work of his Sunday school, the pastor has his empire in the service of teaching his teachers. This service is rendered in the help which he gives for next Sunday's lesson, and in that larger

preparation and more general training for mastership in the teacher's art. These two things are accomplished in the weekly Teachers' Meeting and the special Teachers' Class as agencies for the pastor in teaching those who teach. This opens opportunities which can hardly be estimated.

In the one the pastor is laying foundations of general training in doctrine, in Bible study, in method of teaching, in study of the human mind and heart, making skilled workmen who will be his joy and crown of rejoicing. In the other the pastor is dealing with the lesson for next Sunday, projecting himself into the school by means of his teaching the teachers, and through them into the community, multiplying and augmenting his power for good beyond what we can know. He gets and gives the teachers their message out of God's word; they are getting ready in this Teachers' Meeting to come heart to heart with the class when the school next assembles. When Sunday morning comes, and the service is ended, the classes and pupils go away with the pastor's message, and carry the pastor's message into the home and out into the community.

WHERE HE IS THE PASTOR. This is the place of the pastor's power, and calls for the investment of all the labor and resources at his command. This outlay of time and labor will amply repay in the enlistment, the enlightenment, the enlargement which it brings into the church over which the Holy Spirit has made him overseer. Here he makes full proof of his ministry, to the honor and glory of his Master. His

church, *as a field,* will be white unto the harvest, ready for the reaper's sickle; *as a force,* it will be mighty for God and for doing things in the kingdom; *as a field,* it will have always the joyous music of those who harvest the golden grain; *as a force,* it will have the shout of triumph like the victor's song; *as a field,* this pastor and his church will come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves; *as a force,* they will come as the conquering army comes with trophies for the King and new conquests for his crown.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TEACHER AS GOD'S INTERPRETER.

THE PROCESS OF TEACHING. We come now to the teacher's task of teaching. In the process there are three elements—the teacher, the pupil and somewhat to teach. The teacher may teach books or boys—if boys, then he must have somewhat to teach; if books, then he must have some one to listen and learn. The teacher has two related questions—what to do with his pupil, and what with his subject. One question relates to class formation and management, the other to the process of teaching. To match the one to the other in a way to be effective and have the scholar learn, the teaching must be adapted to the pupil, and the teacher must all the while keep in view his purpose and aim.

The synonyms of teaching are significant: "To give instruction, inform, inculcate, tell, guide, counsel, admonish." In every case there is teacher, subject, and scholar, but what is the teaching process? In the last analysis the teacher is interpreter, and teaching is interpretation. This is true of all teaching, concerning all subjects and in every school. The process is begun in simple form with teaching the alphabet in the secular school or the illustrative work of the kindergarten, is followed on through the higher grades, through college

and university, and on beyond the schools with all subjects, and in every department of learning where teaching is done. The teacher throughout interprets, connects heart with heart, spirit with spirit in the process of thinking, and in the deeper process of feeling, transfers thought from mind to mind, while the teacher teaches and the scholar learns.

Something like this is the process, wherever teaching is done, and points out the teacher's task, whatever be his subject or his school. The teacher stands before his class to say concerning any subject, *which being interpreted means.* This applies with special emphasis in the Sunday school, and requires mastership in teaching for this church service where the word of God is the subject for study and interpretation. The Sunday school teacher is God's interpreter among men, makes him known out of his word, points out his will and way, in high sense speaks for him. There must be earnest purpose and aim to interpret aright the mighty themes which engage his attention—to tell what they mean as the doctrines of God, and apply them to those who hear. The teacher is a bearer of God's thought in God's word.

Christ Our Model Interpreter. He was the incomparable teacher, because he was the world's greatest interpreter. He really taught; his teaching was teaching, the lodgment in heart and mind of the mighty things which he communicated to men. We need a new vision of him as teacher. Of course he was more than teacher—God manifest in the flesh, the Saviour of sinners by his death on the cross. But he was

also teacher, and these higher qualities gave emphasis to his teaching and exalted his office and function as teacher. No man ever taught as he taught, simply because no man interpreted as he interpreted. With his word he touched human hearts, and they lay open to the sunlight; he touched the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and they became simple, beautiful, fragrant like flowers of the garden.

He taught his disciples, taught the multitudes, taught them out of the Scriptures, taught them the things of the kingdom. Under his touch old things were set in new relations, and took on new meaning, while new things came at his call to enlarge the world's vision and make glad the hearts of men. In his parables nature and custom and commonest affairs did his bidding, to convey the mightiest truth to the people so as to have the people understand his meaning. In growing trees he made his disciples see his kingdom expanding and coming to fullness. In the golden harvest fields he made them see the world's need and hear the call for more laborers.

His ever recurring word, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto," was the signal for coming wonders, and his resemblances are fresh and powerful unto this day. Our Lord made nature vocal in explaining the mysteries of the kingdom. With his touch of interpretation, the falling sparrow took on new meaning and made luminous the great doctrine of divine care and providence. The lily of the valley, too, heard his word, and opened the morning song with fresh notes to de-

clare the glory of his kingdom and the greater glory of the King.

The Interpretation of Transcendant Themes. We need to renew our study of Christ as teacher, the model interpreter, not only as to method, but also as to substance and purpose of his teaching. We must have his vision and viewpoint, see things as he saw them in their proper relation, and maintain his point of emphasis and his vital word of authority. We need to follow him in teaching as well as to obey him in keeping his commandments. Even though we look on him as incomparable and unapproachable, we can yet follow after him in method and substance of teaching. Having his word for our word, his eyes for our eyes, we may see as he saw and interpret as he interpreted—speak his word after him, and the word which he bids us speak.

The subjects which engaged our Saviour's attention were of infinite moment to men in every age of the world's history, and concern them both for the life that now is and the life which reaches beyond the stars. In his person, life and teaching, he interpreted God and God's word; interpreted Satan as a dark shadow on his path, a person with purpose and ever driving effort to thwart the things of the kingdom, and as set for the ruin of the souls of men; interpreted sin with its deadly effect in human hearts, with its blighting and ruinous power wherever it touches; interpreted men to themselves, in their relation to each other, in their higher relation to God, how they should conduct themselves in this life, and what they should do for his

kingdom; interpreted human destiny as wrought out here, but finding its fruitage hereafter, when the King shall come in his glory with the holy angels to judge the world, and men shall be separated, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting punishment.

He brought life and immortality to light in the gospel, and by his resurrection from the dead opened a highway through the grave and demonstrated that he was the Son of God with power. His word is the authoritative word on these great subjects, and all related subjects. Our Lord had his audience now with many, and again with only one; sometimes with his select few, and again with the multitude, who gathered to hear his message or for the loaves and fishes. He taught them all whether one or many, the things concerning the kingdom, and adapted his teaching to his hearer and with heart-searching fitness—probing deep or touching with a gentleness and tenderness which would not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax.

He opened the book, "found the place where it was written," and taught the people as one having authority. Their eyes were fastened on him, their hearts were moved under the power of his teaching, and they wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S AUDIENCE. What to do with his subject is the teacher's most urgent question, but that cannot be determined apart from the pupil or scholar, whether many or few, and what to do with an audience or class is itself a momen-

tous issue. The same subjects which engaged our Lord's ministry, which then awakened and made glad the hearts of the people, are today the subjects of Sunday school teaching. Here, even as the Master did, the teacher opens the book, made larger now by the New Testament, and finds the place where it is written. Out of the book he gets his authoritative word, speaks for the King, gives out his authoritative message of grace and truth. The teacher should magnify his class in heart and mind as his audience, worthy of commanding consideration, regardless of how many or what age. He comes to his class even as his Lord came to the people, bearing treasures from the storehouse of the King, laden and rich with the good things of the kingdom.

We use the word pupil and scholar in somewhat elastic way as applied to those attending Sunday school. This is unavoidable perhaps, and yet unfortunate, lest we fail to accord this service its rightful dignity and character *as a school,* and then fail again to rightly recognize its class work as a teaching process. But there is advantage in the wide range of condition with those who attend; it makes the field more diversified, and ever white unto the harvest, enlarges the opportunity and gives possibilities which no man can measure. The attendance is of all ages, from the very young child to men and women far advanced in years, of all degrees of training and lack of training, of all conditions in social life, family life, and other methods of classifying and grading.

These present almost infinite variety, but also in-

finite possibility for God and for the good of mankind —much like the multitudes, we may imagine, which greeted the great Teacher on the mountain side, the lake shore or the crowded street. They are gathered here in this teaching service of the church of Christ, with him as its center and inspiration, with its teachers to stand in his stead and teach out of his doctrine as his interpreters among men.

Assembled in Classes for Instruction. Pupil has reference to setting them in classes for direction and management, scholar refers to learning on their part and teaching on the teacher's part. There must, of course, be wise distribution of scholars and teachers, with graded lessons, and especially graded teaching—grading the classes by age for the most part, but possibly sometimes by other considerations, separate classes and separate classrooms, with everything done to the best advantage and for the most effective service. Notwithstanding this distribution of scholars into classes, the school preserves its strong and beautiful oneness. It is the amalgamation of many into one, made homogeneous somewhat, combined into one uniform whole, with one purpose and largely in one spirit, while the separate class as the teacher's audience opens the way for the teacher and gives emphasis for the teaching service.

This one class is the teacher's concern, the burden of his heart, but also his joy and crown of rejoicing. The conditions call for the best teachers, and these teachers at their best. There must be devoutness of spirit and faithfulness in teaching. "The humblest worker in

the mill can do an absolutely ideal work if he is doing it in the right spirit. This whole social fabric of ours is only a gigantic mill, and the eternal value of our work does not depend upon the question of whether the wheel we have to turn is a small one or a large one." These noble words from Professor Munsterberg, so true and beautiful for every position and relation of life, have distinct significance for the Sunday school teacher with his one class gathered in the church service to study and teach the word of God.

How often and sadly we do miss it, in our judgment as to what is small and what large. In this school throughout, the present borders on the future, the temporal on the eternal, the mightest educational processes are at work. The teacher who sees nothing great in his class, nothing momentous in this teaching hour, or has inadequate sense of responsibility in handling the word of God, is like the preacher who fails in personal respect for his audience and undervalues its meaning. He dishonors his message as coming from the King, and falls short in his ministry of the high calling of God. The greatness of the Sunday school class is measured not by the number or age of its members, but by their spiritual need, by the greatness of the teacher's message, by the immeasureable greatness of his possible achievements. This exalted but just conception of the teacher's function greatly magnifies his office, and should be his inspiration and joy.

To Interpret God and His Word. This is the process and first aim in Sunday school instruction, and is needed alike by all scholars, whether adult or chil-

dren of very tender years. The large classes of men, being formed in Sunday schools throughout the country, and becoming more frequent and commanding, greatly emphasize the importance of Sunday school work, and augment its efficiency for making better church life and better service in the kingdom of God. But we must not allow ourselves to undervalue the smaller class or the work of teaching those who are younger—even the youngest and most unpromising. It is wonderful to teach any one in the thought of God, child or grown up person. Their spiritual need is much the same, and must be met in much the same way through the Scriptures as the instrument of teaching, with the teacher being interpreter of God's thought and word and will.

Our Saviour was moved with compassion when he saw the multitude, not merely the number, but the need of those who thronged him. He saw their hunger, but also their deeper need. They were as sheep without a shepherd, lost and without a Saviour. This condition of the class, this heart need of the scholars, of whatever age, and whether many or few, is what holds the teacher to his task, and stirs in him the spirit and mission of his Master. He is moving in the sphere of eternal value, is at the very point where heaven and earth co-operate in a way to make joy among the angels of God.

The teaching hour is a momentous hour. Mighty issues hang in the balance and await the turning of the scale. The teacher thinks God's thought after him, speaks his word as he would have it spoken, and in the

meaning which he intends, interprets God and his word that others may know him. The question who is God, and what of *him,* is incomparably the greatest question which can engage the human mind, a question the right answer to which is paramount to all else, a question too in reach of the child and the unschooled, while taxing to the utmost the profoundest thinkers. Bunyan's "Mr. Wrong Thoughts About God," was a real character, whose successors even now are abroad in the land, working havoc in nearly every department of learning. A recent writer charges even the great theologians with "misrepresenting God." But the man who can set aside the world's great theologians with a wave of the hand is liable himself to be wide of the mark, and little suited to lead others aright in their thinking.

Manifestly we are dependent on the Scriptures both in forming our own views of God and in teaching others to know him. We need to follow the thought, and even use the language of those who spoke for him, when moved by the Holy Spirit in the day of special inspiration. To tell who God is, what God thinks, what God says, and what are his purposes—to venture into this kingdom of high interpretation, is enough to make an angel hesitate, and yet is exactly the sphere and mission of the Sunday school teacher. To think right thoughts about God, and to rightly represent God's thoughts, is of infinite concern. It gives base line and bearing for correct thought on religion and all religious matters; is the undergirding of all Sunday school instruction, the bolting through and through of

all doctrinal character and life, of all holy living and godly endeavor.

Examples of How to Interpret. It is not possible to define God. The Bible nowhere undertakes either definition or proof of his existence. It tells glorious things of him, however, things which speak for themselves as the sun in the splendor of noon, of his being and person, of his infinite attributes and inexpressable greatness. Those who know most of him feel most profoundly that there is "none like unto him, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." The heaven of heavens cannot contain him, and the whole earth is full of his glory. Yet with condescension pass finding out he bends the heavens and comes down, is mindful of men in these wondrous words of his own speaking: "Them that honor me I will honor; they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

In the Book of God we may walk with him and think his thoughts after him. In its pages, heaven-lit with the glory of his presence, we have examples of interpretation and lofty terms in which we can think and express our thoughts concerning him. This is our standard of interpretation, and must command the heart and conscience in teaching. It is lofty thinking, and the noblest mold in which to cast our thoughts. The writers in the Old and New Testament alike spoke with unerring authority while our Lord was himself his own authority in making revelation of the Father.

These interpret God so that others may know him in relation to their sin, show him at once the God of wrath with consuming fire for those who repent not

and believe not, but also the God of infinite love with saving grace to such as seek his pardoning mercy in the blood which was shed for sin. They came by the way of the cross in their interpretation, and we must follow as they lead. This twofold view of God is of infinite moment to us, if we would know him aright ourselves and interpret him aright for others. Anything short of that is short of the truth, a discredit to the teacher, a dishonor to God, and endangers the very soul of those whom we teach, regardless of their age or other conditions. We are thinking after the King, and need to walk in the King's highway.

THE TEACHER'S PRAYER AS INTERPRETER. Prayer in its highest form is communion, fellowship, worship of God. While the teacher tells his class of God, he also tells God about his class. The more deeply the magnitude of his work takes hold on the teacher's heart the more he feels the need of divine help, both in the interpretation of his word and in opening the hearts of the scholars to hear. He needs to come face to face with God before he comes face to face with his audience. He needs to pray as Moses prayed: "I beseech thee, show me thy glory. Send us not up hence unless thy presence go with us." How we do need the heavenly assurance, "My presence shall go with thee."

The teacher must keep God in mind *as God,* and with his class must worship him in the beauty of holiness. This is basal to all else and starts where the Bible starts. Godhood comes before Fatherhood; universal Godhood before universal Fatherhood. His being God—*the I Am that I Am*—gives meaning and

strength to every other phase of his character and work. It is this tremendous fact that awakens the sense of reverence, worship and awe. It is sublime and joyous to interpret God to others, whether adult or child, and of infinite moment to interpret aright that they may know aright.

A little child fresh from the Sunday school class was asked by a professed infidel this mightiest of all questions: "But how do you know there is a God?" She answered in the ardor of childhood: "Why, my teacher knows God—*she just knows him.*" That teacher surely walked in the ways of God, had been on the mount, and came to the class with a shining face. The child took knowledge of her, that she had been with God and learned of him. "I beseech thee, show me thy glory. Send us not up hence, except thy presence go with us."

CHAPTER X.

TO INTERPRET CHRIST THE LORD.

AS SEEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. The Bible has for its object, speaking broadly, the interpretation of Christ, and offers him to the world as the Saviour from sin. Its finest flower, perhaps, is the great word: God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, who as the Lamb of God beareth away the sin of the world. The law and the prophets were until John as the man sent of God, and were fulfilled when Jesus of Nazareth appeared on the scene. What the beloved disciple said of his own Gospel is equally true of the Scriptures as a whole: "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Their fulfillment brought in a new era and set a new order in the movement of human events. Old Testament prophecies became New Testament history, written by chosen men, that Christ might be made known through successive years even to this present time. The two questions, one asked by Christ himself, the other by Pilate—what think ye of Christ? what then will you do with Jesus?—are still living questions of present moment and power. Who is he, and what of him? What of his unique life and incomparable teaching?

What of his death on the cross, his resurrection from the dead, his enthronement at the right hand of the Majesty on high? What of his great commission with its mighty meaning, its far-reaching sweep of thought and conquest, its promise of his abiding presence with those who are working out his purpose and the fulfillment of his mission in the world?

These are extraordinary questions, and press for answer wherever the gospel is preached. They hold the hope of the world's redemption, and contemplate the coronation of the world's Redeemer, if only we seek our answer in the New Testament as the authoritative word. He is the glory of its pages, as he was the constant wonder while on earth even to those nearest him. Those who wrote of him, whose records have come down to us, as well as those about whom they wrote, never once lost sight of him. He filled the field of their vision from the opening in Matthew to the glorious closing in Revelation. We must follow the testimony of these men in its letter and meaning, and interpret him in their spirit and with their intent.

A Right Creed Concerning Christ. The general principle discussed in the preceding chapter has here its specific application—the Sunday school teacher's interpretation of his Lord. It is a high and holy task, full of meaning for the teacher, brings the message of salvation to the pupil, and is at the very heart of Sunday school instruction and purpose. To interpret Christ aright the teacher must have a right creed concerning Christ. But this creed must be more than mere words in creedal form, however correct and com-

plete, however important and even essential. It must be a creed of character and life, of spirit and Christian activities—a reproduction of Christ and of the Christly; a creed in word and spirit that comes from learning of him and the New Testament men, in life and devotion, in teaching and service—Christly throughout, and coming to its full meaning with the Sunday school teacher in the lesson hour when he interprets Christ in what he is, what he has done, and what his will and purpose among men.

To make Christ known has been the one Christian purpose through all the centuries, and while more persons now call him Lord and rejoice in his saving grace than ever before, yet the right interpretation of him is today the most urgent of all our problems both for his cause and for saving the world. There are many voices crying, Lo, here and lo there, concerning him, and there is conflict in the cry. There is pressing need for a right creed, a decisive word, a supreme standard, a final authority concerning him. They are the best people who in character and life, in service and doctrine, best represent Christ before the world, and best interpret his word as his message of grace to men lost in sin.

Yet the very best interpreters among us need as their guide interpreters higher up—*and yet higher up,* until we come to the Scriptures as the *sole* authority to speak the final word, to show what manner of man he was, and what manner of Saviour to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God through him. We cannot press too strongly at this point our absolute

dependence on the New Testament for the creed concerning Christ, or its ample sufficiency for all we need, or its sovereign right to rule in our thinking and teaching concerning him. The interpretation of Christ is practically to interpret the New Testament. The historic Christ at least is even impossible to us except through the New Testament. We are safe only as we speak its word and walk its way.

The New Testament first and foremost is history, and its primal value is its historic value. But it is much more. Besides its history as the basis of all else, there is also the New Testament spirit, the New Testament life, the New Testament doctrine and teaching, the New Testament mission and destiny. And Jesus of Nazareth is the one central, masterful figure throughout, who gives meaning and character to all else, and without whom nothing would remain. This book is the one original source, and is open to us, new, fresh and illuminating as the sunlight which this morning broke over the eastern hills and filled the eastern sky with glory.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHRIST. It was preeminently fitting, and necessary too, that the coming of the heavenly visitor to this world should first be announced by the heavenly messenger. An angel told Joseph and Mary of his coming, told them in lofty and lordly language who he was, how he should come, and what his glorious mission among men. When he came, the angel with a great company of the heavenly host brought the glad news to the shepherds in the announcement of his advent: "Unto you is born this day

in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

It was a wonderful saying, and was the fulfillment of Isaiah's word spoken centuries before: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders, his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." This was the meaning of the manger with its holy contents, and is the starting place for all efforts to interpret him whom the shepherds worshiped, and before whom the wise men spread their gold, frankincense and myrrh—Christ the Lord, born as the world's Saviour. Everything in the New Testament works out from this event and in confirmation of this record.

Matthew's gospel leads the way as the Genesis of the New Testament. As author he holds unique place among authors, and his Gospel as a pen picture of our Lord is of surpassing importance and of incomparable charm in the world of literature. Though probably not the first written of the New Testament books, it is yet first in every essential sense, and came to its place by fitness and right, by divine care and historical necessity. Its portraiture of him may be outlined as follows:

1. Jesus the Messiah of Prophecy.
2. Jesus the King with a Kingdom.
3. Jesus the Incomparable Teacher.
4. Jesus the World's only Saviour.
5. Jesus the One Unconquered Conqueror.

These five great lines run full length of Matthew's gospel, becoming all the while more and more luminous. They are comprehensive, but not complete. Back of all this is still the profounder question of his Person: Who was he? Who is he? The outlines of the portraiture do not touch the deeper question of his essential nature. There is a Person in the portraiture. Matthew sets him before us in noblest and charming fashion, leaves no doubt or room to question the Lordship of Jesus, his essential Deity. He was the Messiah, but also the Son of the living God; the Prince of Peace, but also the everlasting Father. It is well to walk these heavenly heights in the kingdom of thinking, and to breathe this heavenly atmosphere, if we venture to stand in his stead and interpret in his behalf.

CONFIRMED IN THE TESTIMONY OF OTHERS. Other writers followed Matthew to complete his interpretation of Christ, confirming and emphasizing, sometimes enlarging and even making more luminous all he wrote, and showing in noble proportions the portraiture of their Lord and ours. Throughout from first to last of the New Testament pages Christ is set forth as Christ the Lord, as being born and having his life among men, teaching and doing his mighty work, dying on the cross, rising from the dead, ascending into glory, and as being now at the right hand of God. Then follows full interpretation of what all this means, clear, strong, and never once wavering from the Lordship of his Person, or the Saviourhood of his office, or the work of redemption through his blood, until in vision of final triumph and coronation glory he is pre-

sented to all created intelligences as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Peter, who had received the revelation from heaven, led all the other disciples with the wonderful confession for himself and them: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." As one born out of due time, Paul later spoke the word concerning Christ, both for himself and for all in every age who have known his saving grace: "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." "I am crucified with Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me." "He emptied himself, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee might bow and every tongue confess him Lord to the glory of God the Father."

But it was left for John, ripe and rich in experience with his Master, to complete the record; to bring in the final scene of New Testament coronation, with the new heaven and the new earth, with the work of redemption finished, and the song of Moses become the song of the Lamb: "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory and dominion forever and ever."

WHAT CHRIST SAID FOR HIMSELF. It is worth while to go back of these men to see where they anchored their faith and conviction, to find the inspiration of their hope and triumphant note. Were these men and others justified in what they say of their

Lord? Are we justified in following them? They knew him, had every opportunity of knowing him thoroughly. They served and suffered, wrought and died as all the world knows, never once wavering in the steadfastness of their faith and confidence. But the Sunday school teacher and others may even go back of these men in a sense, and through their aid may stand next to Christ himself, deal with him at first hand, know him for themselves.

Our Lord himself and his first word which he spoke for himself, mean the same to us as for the first disciples. He speaks in the present tense, and leaves no uncertain word for himself, if only we accept his word in its simplicity and fullness of meaning. He used not, for he needed not, the formula of the old prophets, "The word of the Lord came unto me saying," but rather spoke for himself with that imperial word, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." He spoke, as centuries before God had spoken from the burning bush, I Am that I Am.

"Before Abraham was I am." "As the Father hath life in himself, so also it is given to the Son to have life in himself." "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." "I am the way, the truth and the life." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." "I am the resurrection and the life." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also." "I and the Father are one." "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee—that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, Take up thy bed and walk." "All authority is given unto me—and I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

These words, and many others of similar import, spake Jesus concerning himself—speaking as no man could speak. They make sure, beyond all peradventure, the supernatural in his life and the theistic in his Person. The word supernatural is a strong, noble word, and comes to its fullness of meaning as applied to Christ. And yet it is hardly adequate to him, being a relative term, a question of up and down, and depending on, who one is and what the sphere of his operation. Not so with the word theistic, nor the theistic element in the Person of Jesus, but these are fundamental and absolute terms. This exceptional and mighty word carries us to the very heart of the nature of Jesus, and is of the very essence of Deity.

Besides, God sometimes endowed men with supernatural power, temporarily and when the occasion required, but not so with Jesus and the supernatural in his life. He was supernatural not as an endowment, but the supernatural is essential quality of his being. Jesus was human and superhuman, essentially natural and essentially supernatural, walking among men, yet more than man. He was also theistic—theistic in nature and person, in power and authority; had the ability and the right to do what man cannot do; he was Son of man and Son of God, human and theistic, very God and very man.

Such is the plain and necessary meaning of the word which Christ spoke concerning himself. What he said of himself, we may say of him in reverent, obedient hearts. We cannot stop short, we have no desire to stop short of these august, imperial words which mark

him as Lord and Saviour. His appeal to Thomas—"be not faithless, but believing"—reaches and masters our hearts, and we believe, though having not seen, and answer as Thomas answered: "My Lord and my God." Then comes his sublime crowning word as he faces his Father: "I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them."

HIS MIRACLES AS SIGNS OF WHO HE IS. We may walk in the light of his parables, and in the strength of his miracles. Christ's parables and miracles are unique, and are worthy of separate study, but they supplement each other, and have the common end of making him known. The parables concern for the most part the mysteries of his kingdom, making known his nature and power and coming glory with himself as King. The miracles are different, in a sense more powerful. The use of the word *sign* instead of the word miracle by the New Revision, is distinct gain in translation and meaning. The things which Jesus did were miracles, in view of their effect on the people. They excited wonder, the people were astonished, and said they never saw it on this fashion. They were called powers, when considered as to their source or cause; they were extraordinary, the product of extraordinary power. The word *sign,* as applied to our Lord's work, goes to the very heart of their meaning and purpose. They testify to him, signify who he is,

as to his rank and mission. The "beginning of his *signs* did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him." "In Jerusalem at the Passover, during the Feast, many believed on his name, beholding his *signs* which he did." "Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these *signs* that thou doest, except God be with him."

The signs never change in language or significance. They made him known then and make him known now. They speak all languages, bear testimony to him with all people everywhere, and their meaning may be summed up as follows:

1. They Show the Genuineness of his Character,
2. They Testify the Theistic Element in his Person,
3. They are the Insignia of his Authority on Eearth,
4. They Foretoken his Ultimate Purpose.

The old Latin saying about Jesus—*If not God, then not good*—stands impregnable in the conflict of today. His signs have increased in the power of their testimony with the passing centuries, and forecast the future for triumphant consummation. He gave water and fed the multitude, and in the end there shall be no more thirst nor hunger. He forgave sin, cured the sick, relieved the suffering, raised the dead, foreshadowing in his signs that in the new heaven and the new earth "God shall wipe all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor

crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for God shall be with them and be their God."

Throughout his ministry our Lord, with absolute confidence in his *"works,"* appealed to them as his signs and relied on them as convincing testimony in his behalf. He, however, never called them miracles, but works. They did not excite his wonder, and were not a surprise to him. They were extraordinary to the people, but ordinary to him, being in his own plane, and resulting in the simple outgo of his inherent energy. In a sense they are no longer even a wonder to us, for we have come to know Christ, that these mighty things were inevitable under his gracious touch and word.

At the grave of Lazarus, the most trying experience in the life of our Lord prior to Gethsemane and the cross, he was greatly troubled, groaned in spirit and made special prayer, yet calm as the mountain is calm in its sunlit glory; he spoke the word, the dead man lived and came forth—a foretoken of the time when all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and others unto condemnation.

THE NEW TESTAMENT SUMMARY. Jesus of Nazareth was the man Christ Jesus, the one Mediator between God and man. As the Word in the beginning with God, he was God, became flesh and dwelt on the earth. John and others saw him with their eyes, handled him with their hands, knew him as the Word of life. They beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. In him were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowl-

edge, and in him also dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. This is the New Testament summary. And the Sunday school teacher's interpretation of his Lord follows this New Testament word in its spirit of obedience and reverence, in its sentiment of devotion and worship.

Jesus of Nazareth is the comparable man of history, and God's highest revelation of himself. He was the brightness of the Father's glory, the expressed image of his person. To see him is to see God, to know him is to know God, to interpret him is to interpret God, to serve him is to serve and honor God. He is the risen Christ at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and ever liveth to make intercession for us through the atonement of his blood. He is the head of all principality and power. If any man sin he hath an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and his blood cleanseth from all sin. He is all and in all, and we are complete in him.

So the New Testament interprets Jesus throughout its pages, and sets him before the world as the world's redeemer. "Great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Confessing him as our Lord, and believing that God hath raised him from the dead, we interpret him as to the facts of his life, as to who he is, as to his relation to the needs of men, as to his will or what he wants done in the world. We give ourselves to him as willing messengers to publish everywhere what Jesus has done in saving the lost and in making the world better.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TEACHER WITH HIS MESSAGE OF GRACE.

THE CRUCIFIED AND RISEN CHRIST. Christ came as the Son of God, "sent to make propitiation for sin." As the Saviour "he was delivered up for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." These two events hold the center of human history, and are central as doctrine in the Christian system. "If thou shall confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart, that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." This is the message of grace which the Sunday school teacher bears to his class, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Through the death of Christ, God is just while justifying the sinner who believes in Jesus; by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus was declared to be the Son of God with power. No one knows Christ aright, or can speak the word in his behalf, who does not know him in his atoning death and resurrection power. His death and resurrection are matters of history, essential and basal facts in the work of redemption, marvelous, and beyond all compare in their experiential power.

SCRIPTURE FACT AND WHAT THE CROSS HAS WROUGHT. The experience of the cross of Christ in the heart, in its power to deliver from sin and set the

captive sinner free, has been the unbroken triumph of the gospel from the first until now. There was opened in the house of David a fountain for sin and uncleanness, that has never failed of cleansing efficacy. In the shedding of his blood there is fullness of remission. "Much more, then, being now justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him—reconciled to God by the death of his Son, we shall be saved by his life." "Him who knew no sin God made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

I saw one hanging on a tree
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed his languid eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood.

Sure, never to my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
It plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
And helped to nail him there.

A second look he gave, which said:
I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid;
I die that thou mayest live.

This experience of the sainted Newton has been repeated over and over again in those who with their burdens have come upon the cross and its bleeding victim. The doctrine of the cross holds its place among

the mysteries of grace, but its saving power is a matter of history and human experience. It breaks the power of sin in the heart and masters the life for Christ. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." "I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Bunyan's pilgrim came this way with his burden, and had the same story to tell of what he saw and experienced and found at the cross. The hill was steep, the way rough and rocky, while the heart with its burden of sin had come almost to the breaking point. "Up the way, therefore, did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the cross his burden loosed from his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do, till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more. Then he stood awhile, he looked and wondered, for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden."

Of Moment in Sunday School Teaching. The death and resurrection of Jesus for present-day interpretation were brought over on purpose from the preceding chapter because of their essential part in the teacher's message of grace. There is no message of grace without this. The teacher who is dumb before

his class concerning the cross, or has uncertain words concerning the empty sepulchre, becomes "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal" in all other teaching. Whatever else he may have, he surely does not carry the message of grace, and is not a messenger of salvation. *This is the crucial point in teaching.* To interpret our Lord in any phase of his character and life is of tremendous concern. But the severest moment perhaps comes when the teacher beholds the Prince of glory die, or looks with John and Peter into the open sepulchre, and turns to the class to say, which being interpreted means.

The right interpretation of the cross, of Christ's death as the sacrifice for sin, is of pressing need in pulpit and Sunday school teaching. We must learn from the Scriptures what was meant and accomplished by his death, and what the meaning of his rising from the dead. What these things meant to the first preachers, they must mean with the preachers and teachers of today, having the advantage, however, of unbroken triumph through centuries. There can be no right interpretation of the cross or of the open sepulchre except as we interpret them in the language, meaning and spirit of the New Testament.

Christ's death was unlike any other death in history as to its purpose, for so it was declared both by himself and by those who learned of him in word and spirit. No one can understand Christ who does not see in him from his baptism onward a very purpose and passion for the cross. His face was set for Jerusalem and Calvary. Even in the glory of transfigura-

tion he talked of his coming death. Midway his ministry, with his memory on his baptism in the Jordan, with the cross in contemplation, as if groaning in spirit, he spoke that great word: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished?" Also that other great word of exultant triumph: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. This spake he, signifying by what death he should die," and for what purpose he would lay down his life that he might take it again.

The New Testament preachers summed up all their preaching in the one great cardinal fact, Christ and him crucified. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." This was the sum and substance of the message of grace which preachers and teachers of the cross bore to all the peoples of the earth. What the facts meant then, and what the message meant then, they must mean now. And what it did for those people is what it offers today to a world in sin. It is salvation by the cross.

THE CAUSE AND THE OCCASION. But why all this? "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Yes, if we think of the cross, and think on the occasion. The cause was in the love of God, the occasion was man's sin which brought a crisis in the moral government of the universe and made redemption necessary. "Herein is love, not that

we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be propitiation for our sin." But back of all this and over against the cross, as an overshadowing darkness, is "the exceeding sinfulness of sin."

To know the love of God and the saving power of the cross, the teacher must also know the sin of the human heart, the infinite need of quickening by the Spirit of God and of the atoning and cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ to save from wrath and to make the heart clean. He will measure the greatness of God's love and the power of the cross, as he sees the enormity of sin; or he will know the awfulness of sin and the infinite ruin which it brings, as he contemplates and rightly views the marvelous outlay of divine mercy.

A recent English writer says, There is need for vastness of thought in the preaching of today. This is true also of the Sunday school teacher in his thinking and teaching. Not indefiniteness, but largeness of view in teaching the mighty things of redemption—largeness of view concerning God, concerning sin in its exceeding sinfulness, concerning mercy and pardon, concerning the mighty change needful and possible in the human life and heart. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found," is the teacher's message of grace. "Call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way; and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, who will abundantly pardon." This is the call of mercy: the sinner answers in the prayer of a broken heart:

"O, wash my soul from every sin,
And make my guilty conscience clean,
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

"My sins tho' great do not surpass
The power and glory of thy grace.
Great God, thy nature hath no bound,
So let thy pardoning love be found."

Such prayer, the burden of every heart under a sense of sin, is not far from the cross, and the seeking sinner is not far from the Saviour who came to seek and to save. The teacher who feels the deep need of his class before God, and makes their salvation the burden of his prayer, will greatly enrich his message, and bring it to precious fruitage in leading the lost in the ways of God and salvation.

Winning the Lost to Christ and His Service. This is the meaning of the teacher's message and its vital purpose. The preacher or teacher, the church or its school, that does not that thing, fails of his mission, fails in the thing for which Christ died. Religious education is an element in Sunday school teaching, and of vast importance, too, as will be shown in a later chapter, but incidental and not primal. The school should give culture and training of high order, such as will give fitness for citizenship in the kingdom of God. But back of this education in its best sense is the primal and imperial purpose of saving the lost, of winning them to Christ, and to his service.

The principle is very simple, the policy comprehensive and far-reaching. One must have the pear tree

before he can raise pears, must have wheat before he can grow wheat. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. So also in the spiritual kingdom where one deals with mind and soul and spirit, in relation to God and things eternal. What will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, including all education and learning, and lose his soul—lose himself for this life and for what lies beyond?

Salvation, as provided in the New Testament, is something apart from education, though itself an educative power. It has to do with one in his sin, at the point of his deepest and greatest need. It is deliverance from sin, the choicest blessing which God can give, and lays the groundwork for training and culture in things spiritual. It comes through the cross, through faith in Christ crucified and risen from the dead as the Saviour of sinners.

Salvation, as pertaining to the soul's act, means repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. It brings in a new life for the soul through the quickening of the Holy Spirit, and lays the basis for a new character with new relation to God. It brings a new day into one's life, whether child or adult, and sets him to live for God, and for others in the service of God. It is regeneration in the heart, but reformation in manner and purpose of living. Education through salvation is easier and more to be expected than salvation through education.

The Need for the Supreme Word. There must be no mistake in estimating sin as to its nature and deadly effect in the heart, nor in estimating salvation

either as to its need or how it comes. There must be the authoritative word, and this is found only in the Scriptures. The teacher's message is the message of grace to those in need of mercy. Mercy means God dealing with sin and sinners, means God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

Failing in this the teacher will surely miss the mark in all his teaching, and be no bearer of the message of grace, and will surely lead his class into danger and peril, in whatever department or grade he teaches, whether adults or children. It is a fearful blunder to go astray as God's messenger, and fail with God's message—to speak other words than God would have spoken, and which are needed by those with whose life and destiny we are entrusted. This emphasizes the imperative need of following the New Testament in our efforts to save the lost and instruct them in the way of life.

The teacher's mission, means and primal purpose are the same as our Saviour had when on earth. In a sense the same as those which carried him to the cross, and made effective his dying for sin as its punishment, and for sinners as their salvation. Sin is the same now as then, not always in symptoms and outward manifestations, but the same in the heart as to its deadly and ruinous effects, the same in its relation to God, as putting the heart at enmity with him; it makes dead in trespasses now, has need of pardon and mercy, which are possible only through the blood of the cross.

Our Saviour spoke the final word for all who would lead the lost in the way of life. He bore the message

of grace, and met the lost as the teacher must meet them today. The woman at the well was at the bottom of the moral and social scale; the young lawyer was at the top morally, and perhaps socially; Nicodemus was moral and religious, cultured and of high rank. These are types of those lost and in heart-need of salvation, and Christ met their common need with the thought concerning God. To the woman he said, "God is a spirit," and uncovered her heart to herself. To the young lawyer he said, "Only one is good, that is God"—revealing the barrenness and shallowness of his soul, showing sin, too, in its inwardness of the heart, a darker and deadlier evil than the young man had ever dreamed. To the Jewish Rabbi, Christ spoke the imperial word to the very heart of his need, clearing away the formal and outward polish of culture and moral living: "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God."

A Lesson of Danger and Warning. These types are here now, and must be met as they were met then. The Sunday school teacher will find these varying types in his class, and must deal with them as the Saviour did, in the same spirit, discovering the need which sin has made, and offering the only remedy in the blood of the cross. In dealing with the lost, the teacher must go beneath the surface, back of the culture and all outward show to the inner heart where sin is, and whence are the issues of life. It is not a question of outward condition in any sense, whether of family or of how able one is, or of what manner of life, but sin—sin in the heart—*what to do with sin.*

A preacher visiting a large church was asked to make a talk to the Sunday school. He pointed out to the children what sin had wrought in their heart, their need of salvation through the Holy Spirit and the atoning blood of Christ. But the teacher interrupted him, and said: "These children do not come from the *slums,* but from nice homes, and do not need what you are saying." Then turning to the class, said: "You children who love Jesus, hold up your hands." They all voted the teacher right! A Sunday school class in which there is no room nor recognized need for the cross or the crucified Christ, is a sad, sad spectacle! A class wrapped in a beautiful winding sheet, yet the teacher not even knowing they are dead—beautiful only as the flower-covered casket is beautiful, or the snow-covered mound in the cemetery!

Forty years ago the possibility of "child conversion" was an issue much discussed. Now, however, some think children do not need conversion, while others seem to think they are the only possible subjects of conversion. Consequently the grown-up are often neglected, and especially if they are not in the Sunday school; possibly they are counted beyond the saving power of the gospel. As if grace were shortened or abridgement had come in the efficacy of the cross! We need ever a fresh vision of Christ in his saving power. He that cometh from Edom with stained garment is still the Mighty to save. The teacher should carry his message of grace to his class, and beyond his class into the homes and social circles where his pupils have their daily association.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS THE ONLY WAY, THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS THE ONLY MESSAGE OF GRACE. But it is now being said in contrast with the former issue, that the child—especially the children of "nice homes," pretty clothes and clean lives as the world counts cleanness, *do not need conversion;* that in natural birth they were born into the spiritual kingdom, and are the children of God; that Christ's demand for a new heart has no meaning for them; that they do not need the cross, must not even be told of the awful tragedy as a sacrifice for sin; indeed, that they are not sinners gone astray from God and lost without the blood of the Lamb. This view, however, is contrary to all history with its trail of sin, and contrary to all Christian experience of young and old alike who came to know the love of God, passed from death unto life, from darkness into light, and have been translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

It is contrary, furthermore, to the word of God, and goes far astray from the teacher's message of grace, speaking other words than God has bidden him speak, and leaving his class and all who come under his influence in danger and peril. It makes the cross of none effect, counts Christ's atonement for sin as a thing out of date, sets at naught the work of the Spirit of God in which one becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus—whether child of tender years or one grown gray and hard in sin.

If we speak not the language of Scripture, in the meaning and spirit of Scripture concerning sin and

salvation, then we have no word worth speaking; all is darkness and death; the teacher's message is no longer a message of grace, and the Sunday school loses its purpose and throws away its commission to the world lost in sin. The Scripture, however, is radiant with light and rapturous in the song of salvation. It is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the glory of the cross as revealing God's love for a lost world. The teacher must needs go to the cross for himself if he is to know its saving power, or his own deep need of its saving efficacy. As a messenger of grace he must know the ways of grace in his own heart, else he cannot discern its coming in the hearts of others, or be able like Eli with Samuel to perceive that God is calling the child. An experiential message is the most powerful message, also the most precious.

The teacher has the New Testament word as his authoritative word, and his message is a message of no uncertain sound. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "For God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." These words point unerringly the way of savation, but they go by the way of the cross.

Beyond the cross is the empty sepulchre; beyond the empty sepulchre is the risen Christ, the coronation, the great multitude which no man can number, with palms

of victory. These have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, who once was slain; but is now in the midst of the throne to reign as King of saints. The cross is his sceptre of universal empire, and his dominion shall have no end.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TEACHER AND HIS DOCTRINES.

DOCTRINAL CHARACTER IN THE TEACHER. This chapter has to do with the teacher himself, who he is, what his creed, and what he teaches. His character and worth as a teacher is in what he believes. His doctrine is the sum and substance of what he teaches, of what he himself has learned and made his own. His real creed is not the doctrine which he holds, but rather the doctrine which holds him—his imperial and imperative *credo*.

We are dealing now with the teacher's own inner self and inner life, his doctrinal convictions, his creedal character, his spirit as a man and the spirit of his teaching. This will give flavor and tone, strength, purpose and living energy to all that he does. It is the metal in the blood, the iron in the frame, the intangible something which makes the red rose red, gives fragrance to the flower, makes the oak tree oak in fibre and frame, in foliage and fruitage.

Have we ever yet given sufficient emphasis to creedal character and doctrinal conviction with the Sunday school teacher? This is of vital importance even for the Christian man in the general walks of life, and much more for the teacher in the church school. Far too frequently one may hear it said: It makes little

difference about doctrine so the life be correct, or what one believes so the heart be right; the world wants "deeds and not creeds," with a general cry against dogma and doctrinal teaching, with believing little in general and nothing in particular. All this as if there were no connection vital and decisive, between doctrine and life, between what one is and what one does.

As a man thinketh in his heart so is he; his thinking is in his doctrine, and out of his doctrine comes the manner and meaning of his life and teaching. If there be honesty in business there must first be honesty in character. There is no divorcement between doctrine and life, as cause and effect, as tree and fruit, as fountain and outflow to the valley. There can be no decree of divorce between creed and deed. That word spoken so long ago is yet vital and momentous: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine (or thy teaching); continue in them: for in so doing thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee." First, *himself*, what he is in heart and life, in character, creed and conduct; then his *doctrine*—what he believes and what he teaches, with mighty issues dependent on his teaching both for himself and others.

Christ's Call for Belief in Doctrine. There are those who speak lightly about doctrine, who make much ado about manner and method in teaching, with secondary concern, possibly no concern at all about the substance of teaching, whether in the doctrine the teacher holds as his own or in what he gives out in his teaching. The teacher and his doctrine as a subject, is basal, and is one of the most vital questions in

the present Sunday school situation. It fits into this volume as coming almost to the very heart of its burden and purpose. What a man believes, he teaches, and what he teaches is his doctrine.

Much is said concerning Christ's call to service, and rightly. But does not Christ also call to belief in doctrine? Is one's belief or want of belief of no concern to Christ? Is there no connection between what we believe and the service which we render him in teaching and otherwise among men? We have not given sufficient emphasis or even notice to Christ's *doctrinal earnestness,* which manifested itself on so many occasions and always as an element of power. His doctrinal character indeed was one of the elements of his authority.

Our Lord cherished his doctrine as being his own, and of himself, but also as anchored back in the authority of his Father, and commending itself to the people as being of infinite moment. He calls men now as when walking the earth, not only to salvation and service, but also to belief—belief in himself as to who he is and belief in his word. "Believe me, that I am in the Father and the Father in me; else believe me for the very work's sake," was the appeal often on his lips, and always burning as a flame of fire in his life. "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me," was his challenge to men everywhere with the supreme test of its conquering power. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." His doctrinal earnestness was no less a passion than his passion for saving the lost and for calling sinners

to repentance. His doctrine made him the teacher that he was, and he taught his doctrine as of supreme and commanding moment. Unbelief of his doctrine shocked his soul and made him marvel, disbelief was painful, and stirred him to anguish of spirit.

One may go away from Christ in doctrine or sentiment, as really as in service and life. The effect is equally disastrous, sometimes more far-reaching and more deadly. His pathetic and searching question, "Will ye also go away?" applies to the leaving of his doctrine as well as to the leaving of his person and service. Christ not only sought the salvation of men, but also sought to save them from false doctrine and to establish them in the things which he taught. With him there was a passion for right teaching, and a passion against wrong teaching. The New Testament writers follow him in this, making many appeals for right doctrine and warning us lest we make shipwreck of our faith, or bid Godspeed to those who bear false doctrine.

This was the constant issue which Christ made with the people, or the issue which the people made with him when teaching on earth. Many believed on him, believed his doctrine and followed on to know and serve. But many believed not. With some he himself was the turning point, with others his doctrine was the repellent force—some saying we will not have *him,* while others said, *we will not have what he teaches.* The young man worshiped *him,* but refused *his teaching,* rejected him and his appeals, went away from

Christ, from his doctrine and his service. Christ let him go, though looking after him with a look of love.

His Specific Appeals for Belief. This concern for doctrine was a mighty factor in our Saviour's teaching, marked him as separate from other teachers, and gave him power with the people. Those words of his as being all his own, so often on his lips, and always with such tender searching power, "Verily, verily, I say unto you," were the expression of his authority in teaching, were his emphasis of mighty truth, were the signal of importance and imperial command; they revealed the earnestness of his doctrinal life and his concern for what men did with what he said. On two notable occasions he made special, almost pleading appeals for belief of his doctrine—one with Thomas, the other with the disciples in a group. In both cases the appeal was for belief in himself, in doctrines concerning himself and in related doctrines.

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." These words spoken in the sacred hour almost under the shadow of the cross, were his appeal to his disciples. Belief in God is well nigh universal in some form. Recognizing their belief in God as the basis for all advance, our Lord appealed to his disciples for the larger creed. It was an appeal at that sacred hour for the enlargement of their belief in him, and of their belief in doctrine—*the doctrine* of his relation to the Father, *his doctrine* of heart-comfort, *his doctrine* of the heavenly home and the many mansions, *the doctrine* of his preparing a place for a prepared people, *the doctrine* of his coming again to have his

people with him where he is, and *all those other great doctrines* concerning himself, so wonderfully and richly set forth in this fourteenth chapter of John.

He appeals to this belief already founded, for a larger belief that shall comprehend other great and precious truth. This chapter is called the comfort-chapter, yet is marvelous in the scope and richness of its doctrinal statement. Its comfort would count for nothing but for the doctrine which Christ here teaches, and gives to those, "who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that their faith and hope might be in God."

The Case Concerning Thomas. This is significant and remarkable as a case in point. His Lord dealt with him in his disbelief and brought him to a triumphant faith. The morning of that new day brought a new situation with Christ and his disciples. The wonderful words of the fourteenth of John were fresh in their minds, but apparently had lost all power to hold them together and keep them strong. As the risen Christ, he talked with the frightened women and sent them away to say, They had seen the Lord. He found two disciples going away to Emmaus, believing none of the reports and going into hopelessness. They returned to say, They had seen the Lord, he had talked with them in the way and set their hearts burning. He met the little company in the upper chamber, settled it with them beyond all peradventure, that they too had seen their Lord and knew he was risen from the dead.

But Thomas—where was Thomas, that man who had always been so true, and once said he would die

with him? Possibly he saw Jesus die, certainly knew that he was dead and buried, and now vowed he would not believe him alive unless he should see him for himself, see the side where the spear went in, see the hands where the nails went through. For the whole week this man, once so strong and devoted, went *faithless,* was in the depths and bitterness of the soul without faith and without hope. But Jesus found him, came searching and found the faithless man, stooped to his demands, submitted to his tests, and made an appeal for doctrinal belief the pathos and power of which will not die while the world endures: *"Be not faithless, but believing."* Thomas answered: "My Lord and my God."

All unbelief had gone, and in its place a triumphant and joyous faith. Jesus had won another victory for his doctrine, this time a larger belief in himself as the risen Christ, belief in the empty sepulchre as the conquest over death, belief in the doctrine of his resurrection from the dead, and the overmastering doctrine of his own essential Deity in Lordship and Godhood.

THE TEACHER'S CREED MUST BE AN EXPERIENTIAL CREED. All this has direct and powerful bearing upon the Sunday school teacher and what he teaches, both as to doctrinal belief and doctrinal teaching. In a genuine and even commanding sense he is successor to his Lord as teacher, and is to teach what Jesus taught, as he finds it in the Scriptures. His creed must be a New Testament creed, experiential as with Thomas, being his own in personal belief and conviction—a creed of imperial power.

In the doctrinal earnestness of our Saviour we easily see why Paul and John, and even Peter, who had been with him and caught his spirit, should ring out so clear and strong for doctrinal fidelity, doctrinal integrity, and always with doctrinal power; that everywhere they were mighty in word, and by their doctrine became mighty in deed. Their creed made them men of power. Their words blaze and burn like altar fires to this day, and have wondrous power in showing the teacher where to walk and what to teach. These men were doctrinal men, sent on doctrinal mission, could say even as their Lord had said: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

The Sunday school teacher has a similar mission and the same message. He is to speak the word which he has from his Lord, and which he himself has experienced in his own heart. He is a teacher, and his doctrinal curriculum is made out for him in the word of God. Throughout its pages he thinks God's thought after him, speaks the word as speaking for God, and teaches what he is commanded to teach. The open heart laid on the open Bible will draw out its meaning, giving richness and flavor to his teaching, if only his spirit be reverent and obedient in seeking the ways of God. Such a teacher will not miss very far the meaning of Scripture, nor go far astray in his teaching, whether in spirit or method or in the substance of what he teaches.

THE NEW TESTAMENT HIS ONLY SOURCE OF DOCTRINE. This does not set aside the Old Testament

nor discriminate against it in any sense, but the New is the flower and fruitage of the Old, the only source of Christian history and doctrine, of Christian belief and practice. It is the code so to speak of the church of Christ—but much more than that. Herein we learn of him, of his wish and will, of his church, its nature, ordinances, and mission in the world. These are the things to enlist the teacher's heart as his doctrine and to hold commanding place in his teaching. The church school is a New Testament school, and its teacher pre-eminently a New Testament teacher, with the Old Testament as foundation or undergirding of all.

His teaching is the interpretation of the Scriptures with their history and doctine as related to the salvation of the lost, and the making of Christian character. Out of this storehouse the teacher brings his treasures new and old; speaking its words he speaks with authority. There is none other to command him or guide him, nor any other source from which he can get the word and message of eternal life. Every man must come to the book for himself, and must answer to God for his doctrine and teaching. It is his privilege and duty, especially with the Sunday school teacher, to make out his own creed from its pages and formulate his own doctrinal belief.

This is his duty, as giving definiteness to his doctrinal conception, directness and power in teaching; his privilege, because no one can do this for him, or come between him and his knowing the truth for himself. For the teacher or others who will speak for God, there is no *ex cathedra* outside the Scriptures, no *ex cathedra*

voice concerning the Scriptures. In this kingly domain he thinks for himself, chooses for himself, speaks for himself; he deals only with God and God's word as given in the Scriptures. This royal privilege is his, but with it there is immense personal responsibility. Taking the Scriptures as his own supreme and sufficient rule of faith and life, he has one imperial word that must guide him throughout, namely, *"according to the Scriptures."*

That is the one touchstone, the one decisive word for every doctrine, the one universal standard for all belief and practice—"sound words *according* to the gospel." This brings the teacher face to face with his only authority, the supreme authority of Christ as expressed in his word, and demands loyalty to Christ as Sovereign and to the New Testament as the expression of his Sovereignty. Loyalty is composite—love and law—love doing its best always for the lawgiver and for the glory of his kingdom.

Two Words Set as Signals in the Way. We venture to suggest two pilot words of significance and merit for those who wish to formulate their faith; (1) concerning the Scriptures, (2) according to the Scriptures. These two words, *concerning and according to,* are basal for the Sunday school teacher, and determine what he should hold as doctrine and what he should teach. It is not sufficient in this day to say "the Bible is our creed," for at once we confront the question as to what we believe *concerning the Bible,* and the settlement of this last question largely determines our belief as to many of the great doctrines; settles practically

what we believe about God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, about sin, the atonement through the cross, and our salvation through faith; settles also what we believe about the church, its nature, ordinances, purpose and mission, what we believe about man's future as to the destiny of the righteous and of the wicked.

All these doctrines are settled by the Scriptures, and our belief in them is determined by what we believe concerning the Scripture. Simon Peter believed the Scriptures came not by the will of man, but by the more sure word of prophecy and through holy men of old speaking for God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Paul believed that sin was exceeding sinful, that Christ died on the cross in our stead and for our sin, that he was buried and arose again, believed all this *according* to the Scriptures. What the Scriptures say, is the end of controversy, if we hold them in all faithfulness and loyalty of purpose, to be our supreme standard of Christian belief and practice.

This is not said simply to exalt the book. No one will "worship a book," not even the Bible. But the Bible as the one book and only source of doctrine holds the authoritative word for those who would serve God and walk in his ways. Herein is written for our instruction what God would have us do, his ordinances and laws, his statutes and commandments. Herein is revealed his salvation through the death of his Son, the marvelous work of grace which is wrought in the heart through his Spirit, his will and wish concerning our character and life among men. Without this the teacher has no other guide, and walks in the dark without God

and without hope. With this he walks with God in the sunlight of his countenance, shining brighter and brighter to the perfect day—as the day of redemption and glory which shall be revealed in them that love him.

EVANGELICAL IN WORD, EVANGELISTIC IN SPIRIT AND PURPOSE. The teacher's doctrine as herein contemplated, is not dead doctrine, but vital and powerful, experiential and evangelistic. It is true, of course, that no one is saved by a creed or belief of a doctrine, but when one is saved through an experience of grace, he forthwith has a creed of his own, gracious, commanding and of far-reaching power. He will meet all the world like the man whose eyes Jesus opened with the invincible verdict: "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see." "Herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes." And henceforth that becomes his creed as to Christ in his saving power, as to Christian experience, as to personal character and life. It is the end of all controversy with him so far as these things are concerned.

No one is saved, as is frequently said, through faith in doctrine. Belief in doctrine cannot take away the guilt of sin, or make one a new creature in Christ Jesus. But it is a tremendous doctrine, clearly revealed in the Scriptures, also strong and powerful in many, many hearts as a personal experience of God's wondrous grace, that one is saved through personal faith in Christ as a personal Saviour, that God is just in justifying him that believeth in Jesus, that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy

Spirit which he has given unto us, that we are justified by faith, have peace with God, and "access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. This is the doctrine of salvation.

As doctrines these things make the teacher evangelical in words and distinguish him as a *teacher of the gospel;* they make him evangelistic in spirit, and give him converting power in the class, "saving both himself and them that hear" him. Evangelical is the stove polished to brightness, evangelistic is the stove heated to red heat. Both speak for themselves and for the glory of God. They never fail to awaken the rapturous song of redeeming love. They make for strength and beauty, for might and conquering power. They make the church evangelical in doctrine, and its school evangelistic as its teaching agency for saving the lost and extending the kingdom of Christ.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND OTHER SCHOOLS.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. The school as an educational institution, deals for the most part with those who are in the years of growth. It is designed for their teaching and training, their development and equipment for the walks and trades of life. There are schools and schools, many and almost without number. The educational system of the country is of colossal proportions, viewed from almost any standpoint. No enumeration, however, or survey is necessary to make good the statement. We would omit none, but classify all, giving them the place of merit and worth which they severally deserve.

Taken in the aggregate and considered as a system these schools represent the educational forces of the nation. They make or mar the national life, have their fruitage in the character of men and women, and in their product of citizens and citizenship. The Sunday school holds no secondary place in this vast educational system, and has come to commanding rank as a civic force in the nation's life. In its work and influence the Sunday school is a dynamic among the other schools. Its distinctive character and elements of power have been recited throughout the foregoing

pages; it is coming more and more to be classed as a school; more and more also its efficiency is being increased and its power greatly augmented for fulfilling its mission and realizing its purpose and aim. Including all denominations, the Sunday school numbers hundreds of thousands, widely distributed throughout the territory of the entire country. Its enrollment of officers, teachers and pupils number largely into the millions, many millions, in country homes and churches, in village and hamlet, in towns and cities, a mighty army for the nation's welfare, more powerful than navy and mortar guns.

A nation's safety is both found and founded somewhat in its fortification and bulwarks of defense, but far more in the individual character of its citizens, in the homes of its people, and in a citizenship patriotic, law abiding and true to the principles of Bible righteousness and good government. These qualities go together, and are the sure mark of a nation's strength and prosperity. Their absence leaves a people exposed to foes without, and even greater foes within. The rise and fall of empires can be traced along this trail, and history will repeat itself as the years come and go. Along this line, too, lies the opportunity for wisdom on the part of the people, while it demands statecraft of the highest and noblest type.

THE GERMAN IDEAL OF CITIZENSHIP. These things are true concerning all nations and every people, but especially true of the great republic founded on the democratic principle of "a government of all the people, by the people and for the people." In that regard we

boast of excelling all other countries, yet the ideal of citizenship with Germany commands the attention and challenges the admiration of all the world. That ideal is threefold in character, namely, *"Godfearing, patriotic, self-supporting."* These are held in this order and maintained inseparably connected with the educational system and aim of the empire. The schools of that great nation, whether small or great, whether her public schools or her great universities, are conducted with the purpose of making citizens who shall fear God, care for their country, and be able to provide for themselves.

The furthest removed from the German ideal of educational training, and the furthest removed also from the Sunday school, is that school or system of schools in which God is not honored or recognized or known. A godless school, to the full extent of its influence, is a curse to any nation, blight and death to all its interests of whatever kind. Solomon knew from experience, and all history has confirmed his judgment, that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people," the undoing first in individual life, then in the homes, and finally in national affairs and destiny. Education, even American education *per se* does not guarantee righteousness, and in itself does not promise the highest and noblest means and ends. There is no intention to disparage our great educational system or its standards, but even its highest standards and its best curriculum leave out those things which are intended to make for righteousness and the God-fearing character and life.

The American schools in themselves considered do not promise the German ideal of education and citizenship, especially those schools under the control and management of state or municipality. We may well desire and aim for the German ideal, but the German method for its attainment is un-American, fundamentally wrong and at variance with our principles of government. Germany, as a monarchy, has the union of church and state, and compels "the teaching of religion in its schools." This cannot be done with American separation of church from state patronage and supervision.

Nor would we surrender the great principle of a free church in a free commonwealth, for a temporary gain, however great, which it might seem to promise. But this principle and condition in our government rule the Bible out of the public schools, put the Bible and all religious instruction outside the curriculum and service of State Universities and other schools. If there be exceptions, I am glad to record them, but they are so rare as to give emphasis to the general rule.

Furthermore, in colleges and universities there is small place for religious teaching and training, and the problem of the religious in education is becoming more difficult, according to many statements recently made by leading university educators. "The building of character is the real aim of the school," say the great educational authorities, and yet the chief and mightiest factors in character-building are circumscribed, put under the ban, or eliminated altogether—sometimes by one process, sometimes by another.

Character without religion or the religious principle and culture, is largely a character without fundamental moral sense and purpose. The man who does not regard God, who does not get his moral sense and standard outside himself, and from the highest source, will not for any long time respect his fellowman or the laws which society makes for the government of society. Disregard and disobedience of human law is not far removed from disregard of divine law. Breaking with divine authority will follow quickly upon breaking with human authority.

Not Quite so Bad as it All Seems. This is a condition, and not a theory. There are many offsets, however, to these shades and shadows, these signs of discouragement and danger in our educational system. There are exceptions, with signs appearing here and there for betterment in many of the centers of learning. We gladly recognize these exceptions with their modifying elements wherever the circumstances require or even justify. I would not be unjust to any of our institutions of learning, or even seem to overstate the condition as to the place and influence of religious education in their curriculum. They themselves have given out the words concerning themselves, barring such exceptions here and there which make for a better situation.

The most powerful source of encouragement, the brightest silver lining to the cloud, is the fact everywhere manifest, that in nearly all of these schools there are Godly men and women as teachers, whose lives and influence make for the best in character and moral

training, and who themselves are more powerful than any curriculum. Then, too, in the student body there are many who love God, honor and serve him in sincerity, often move in organized effort to influence their fellow students, to win them for Christ and his service. We gladly bear testimony to whatever is done by these noble young men and women, and bid them Godspeed in their heavenly mission.

But after all this is said, and possibly even more that should be said as modifying the condition, yet it remains beyond dispute that there is a grave deficit in our educational system as such, and that our secular schools do not have as one of their first aims what is the first item in the German ideal, namely, *God-fearing in character and life.* Whatever may be done toward cultivating the patriotic spirit and the self-supporting character, but little is done for laying the foundation for permanent righteousness in the nation's life. But what shall be done with the deficiency? To close our eyes to it will do no good. To recognize it will not mend, but opens the way for mending.

This weak place in our educational system surely makes a weak place in national character and life, and leaves the home and the individual character much impaired. Our system will give education without the moral sense, will give educated men and women who are not God-fearing, and homes where God's name is not written, and where his glory does not dwell. Any discussion here of its cause and cure, of its manifest evil and baneful influence, would take us too far afield from the present purpose.

NAMING A TRIO OF CHRISTIAN FORCES. There are three distinct institutions, however, which make not only "for building character," but for building *Christian character.* These three are the Christian home, the schools under Christian influence and management, sometimes with private ownership, but for the most part with denominational government, and the Sunday school or the church with its school of pre-eminent place and purpose. Only this last is the subject for discussion here, yet it cannot be considered fully if taken apart from the other two. The three are a trio of Christian forces for Christian character building, are allies working toward the same end, and can be best understood as they are considered together and in their co-operative influence.

No one can ever estimate what these three forces have done in behalf of the commonwealth or as mighty factors and civic forces in the national character, life and welfare. And it may be further remarked as relieving the deficiency in the educational system and making more hopeful the educational situation, the Sunday school and the secular schools are friendly, supplemental and co-operative—certainly for the most part and with no points of hostility.

Indeed, working in the system as a whole they largely overlap in teachers and pupils, the secular school being in the church school on Sunday, and the Sunday school being in the secular school for the week day sessions. In each case there is teaching and learning, with each holding to its own line of instruction in subject and method, with genuine exchange of products

and conspiring to the one ideal of character building. They work together for development and enrichment, adornment and equipment in training for citizenship and service in the many walks of life. From this co-operation and composite result come the best fruitage our educational system yields for individual character, for the home, for society, and for the nation at large.

Christian character, it must be kept in mind, is more than educated character, more than even religious character, and in the finished product is the noblest type of manhood among men. It is the Christ-likeness and the God-like, reproduced in men and shining out as the glory of their life.

Its Chief Mark of Distinction. While bearing so much in common with other schools, the Sunday school is yet absolutely distinct, having its own sphere of work, requiring methods peculiar and suitable to itself, holding itself to the one distinct line of Bible study and instruction, demanding its own purpose to teach the Scriptures, with its aim to save the lost, winning them to Christ and training them for his service. The other schools may do these things as side lines and incidentally, but it is the chief business and main task of the Sunday school.

It has the distinction of being the church school, is charged with the church purpose and intrusted with the furtherance of its mission. It is not only Christian in purpose, spirit and influence, but it is *Christ's school,* especially commissioned for his honor and glory, a propaganda of New Testament principles as he gave them to us when he walked among men. As an agency

in his church and under its management, inspired with his spirit and mission, it is his method for perpetuating himself as teacher, for keeping his doctrines fresh and effective for the betterment of men.

The Sunday school, therefore, cannot take the place of other schools, nor other schools with their methods be substituted for the Sunday school. There is nothing to provoke rivalry between them, no room or occasion for adverse comparison. They should work together for the highest ideal in education and the noblest endeavor in human achievements. The school of music has no conflict with the school of oratory, nor the school of sculpture with the school of painting. Each works its own material, its own designs and aims, its own spirit and method, and yet both move in the one general aim for the best and highest in art.

The recognition of these simple facts and principles would go far toward making and magnifying a right policy between the Sunday school and other schools, and would give them their respective places of might and power in the educational system of the country.

Improvement of its Own Methods and Standards. There is no need nor is it wise to force the Sunday school into the methods and ways of the week-day school. The conditions in each are radically and essentially different, and each will work better in its own harness. This is fundamental, and needs earnest consideration at this time. Great improvements are being made in secular education, but the best approved methods are still comparatively new, and yet in the experimental stage. Why should the methods be forced

on the Sunday school, and the Sunday school be forced away from its base, until these methods shall at least be tried and wisdom be justified of her children?

In a Sunday school conference of leaders, a learned paper was presented which advocated for the Sunday school, a method not far short of University Extension Course. The paper had excellence, and was received with favor. But some one suggested that in the Sunday school we do not have the university teacher or pupil, the university method, subject of study, or purpose in work. This makes the radical difference, and demands a different course of procedure.

There is need manifestly for improvement in Sunday school methods, and improvements are being made, in some sections quite rapidly and in a marked way. But a thing is not better except as it is better fitted for doing the work it is set to do. Changes in church school methods must keep in mind its distinctive character and work, purpose and aim. Its improvements must make it more effective in the study and teaching of the word of God as its first and distinct task. We must keep in mind the wide range of its pupils in age, social condition and other varied differences; must never lose sight of the fact that its first great aim is the saving of the lost, then the making of their salvation the basis for Christian character and culture in all those things which beautify and bless society. There must be no departure from these fundamental distinctions of the school in the church that distinguish it from other schools.

That one is specialist in secular schools does not

mean that he is best suited, however sincere and earnest his sympathy, to outline methods and courses of study for the Sunday school. His very training and service in the one may be adverse to high efficiency in the other. The judgment of experienced and successful pastors should count for more. They know the ways and advantages of the other schools, but also know what the Sunday school is to be, and what its mission and service as a church school. It is a matter of common observation that successful teachers in the secular school do not always succeed well in the Sunday school. The methods used in the one do not always suit in the other; the course of study and its teaching are different, with different discipline, spirit, purpose and aim. There should be no adverse criticism, but comparative study of both, with each holding to its own sphere and work.

Requiring its One Text-book. The Sunday school has great educational value, but even that has its specific line, as will be seen in the next chapter. That will come in fullness and richness only as we hold the school itself, in all its changing forms of method in class and class-work, in rules and regulations, to its one great, glorious purpose of serving as a church school—a church school to study the Bible as its one text-book, with Bible purpose and spirit. Whatever there be of departure from this will work toward weakness, inefficiency and failure for this school, and remove it from its place of power and usefulness in the educational system.

The old story of the shoemaker and his *last* is in

point here, homely, but timely and instructive. He who makes shoes had better stick to his *last,* else there will be no shoes. We can teach religious principles, but not religion, for religion is of one's own self and of the heart in its outgo toward God in worship and service. There can be no teaching religious principles except in the study and teaching of the word of God. For this reason there is no room in the curriculum of the Sunday school for other than Bible studies, however worthy and important the other subjects be in themselves.

This statement is justified by every experiment that has been made, and only recites what has already taken place wherever the experiment has been made. Turning from the main course you lose the main things, and the loss is greater and more far-reaching in its effects and influence than we are accustomed to think. Sunday is the golden day in the nation's life. The Sunday school is the crown in our school system; that half hour of Bible study and teaching is the brightest spot and most powerful single factor in the whole educational life. Think what will be going on throughout the country next Sunday, and the Sunday following, and the succeeding Sundays throughout the year, and then throughout all the years, in the thousands, and hundreds of thousands Sunday schools—the music and prayer and study of God's word.

It awakens thoughts to gladness and inspires hope for the nation's life and peace, prosperity and power, out of all comparison with Mr. Carnegie's princely gift to the Peace Fund, or all the elaborate and costly prepa-

rations of defense as a preparation for war or a demand for peace. One cares little for the inscription on the nation's coin, counting it worthy or worthless, but the mighty words, *In God we Trust,* engraved in the national character and made potent in the national life, will be for blessing and honor among our people, and the safe-guarding of American institutions.

Things Which Give it Efficiency. As an educational force and factor among the other schools, the Sunday school has two advantages which may be named here. The first is the student body with the cradle roll at the bottom and the home department at the top, with all ages and conditions in vast numbers between, all engaged in the one study and working to the one great purpose. This makes an impression for God, gives instruction in his word and ways, creates a spirit of reverence, service and worship. It takes the child prior to school age when the young life is freshest with the mind and heart susceptible to hallowed influences. It also takes those past the school age and beyond the school period, who come in to give and to get. These are the bone and sinew of the nation's life, men and women from other schools, from the walks and trades of life, from the learned professions, from business cares, success and failure. All these become pupils in the school of the church which stands for God's work among men. Then, too, these are the almost countless number of boys and girls, young men and young women who soon shall come themselves to be directing forces in society, in the walks of com-

merce, and in the administration of governmental affairs.

In addition to this student body there is another advantage. The Sunday school, while being a school and doing the work of teaching and learning, is much more than a school. That much more than a school makes it distinctive, is its chief glory and power, gives tone and effectiveness to its teaching, makes it at once a service for worship, a church agency for working out its mission and commission among men. In the service of song and worship the heart and mind are prepared like soil for the seed, made at once pliant and absorbent.

The song and singing, the sacred environment in the school contribute much, far more than we suppose, giving the spiritual atmosphere such as make beauty and fragrance in the flower. The Sunday school need not be ambitious to do the work of other schools or walk in their ways, nor be envious of what they have or do, however desirable or commanding their record may be. It should walk humbly, and not boastfully, yet with confidence and buoyancy, even joyously in its glorious mission, singing as it goes till its song girdles the earth, feeling sure that it will serve best in doing what it was set to do.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PROPAGANDA OF NEW TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AS ONE. Dissemination of Bible truth, the extension of Scripture knowledge, is a universal need and of infinite moment. The Sunday school is charged with this specific mission, has this unique curriculum, and as the church school it holds exceptional rank among the forces which make for education. As a school among schools it is distinctively a propaganda of New Testament principles, effective and powerful. "The teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

This primacy of instruction for making wise, this pre-eminence given teachers by the prophet of God in the olden time, has added significance for the present, and still larger and more glorious outlook for the future. Teachers meant then, and primarily must mean now, the teachers of God's word, those who disseminate its principles and precepts, as "the Scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." They think God's thought after him, walk in the ways of his revelation, teach the doctrine he bids them teach, concerning himself and his kingdom among men.

From the Sunday school as a progagating agency

and distributing center, the word of the Lord goes forth, as seed sown broadcast, with nearly thirty million to tell its story week after week and year after year. "As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations"—as the harvest gathering from his word, whether the Old Testament or the New. It shall not return to him void, but like the rain and the snow which cometh down from heaven, it shall accomplish that which he pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it.

"The Scriptures cannot be broken." There is unity throughout from Genesis to Revelation, continuity of unfolding thought and purpose in the Bible as the word of God. During the centuries of its making, there was frequent change of writers, of specific subjects and shifting history, but never a change of author or authorship, of central and basal thought, of spirit and purpose. "No prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit."

"The New is in the Old concealed;
The Old is in the New revealed."

This volume throughtout its pages stands for the integrity of the Bible, the *oneness of the Scriptures* as the word of God. We single out the New Testament not as detaching it from the Old, but for emphasis and as a part representing the whole, and as the expression of Christian thought, and of church life and doctrine.

But "the word of God as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only rule whereby we may glorify and enjoy him," and we must not separate between them or make any division in our recognition of their supremacy and authority in our teaching and life.

The Old Testament is the bed-rock of our New Testament faith. Yet by itself the Old Testament is an unfinished product, calls for completion in the coming of another, bears in itself the promise and potency of the New. Its word was not finished, its song was broken midway its loftiest strain, its final message had not come. The most advance of the Hebrew people were in expectation waiting for the salvation of Israel.

THE NEW TESTAMENT STANDARD. In the fullness of time, however, God lifted the curtain, opened the gate, and the desire of all nations came; with his coming came the New Testament period, and then the New Testament Scriptures. The New must not be detached from the Old, and is best understood in the light and glory of the Old. With the new period came also the making of new history, the bringing in of new energies, the conservation of new forces. In peculiar and distinct sense the New Testament is the exponent and standard of the New Testament church, setting forth its nature, spirit and mission, its doctrines, ordinances and ministries. It discloses God's purpose of redemption, becomes his messenger of light and salvation to all the ends of the earth. Wherever the Scriptures may go in triumph and power, whether the Old Testament or the New, "the word of God is living, and

active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intent of the heart."

The New Testament especially, as the embodiment of Christ's teaching and the expression of his authority, is in his church for its instruction, its government, the expansion of his kingdom. It is the one standard of church faith and practice, otherwise the Christian world is at sea, without chart or compass. We may differ in our interpretation of the Scriptures, but cannot question their right to rule the heart and life in principle and practice. This goes further as a principle, is more explicit, and demands more, than the slogan of the Reformation: "The Bible, the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants." As "the rule of faith and practice" the Scriptures are sufficient and vital, universal and supreme, imperative, and must command the creed, the conscience, the conviction, the church relation of all who bear the name of him whose name is above every name.

This is the fundamental principle in Christian doctrine, as obedience to Christ is the fundamental principle in Christian life; it will not admit of controversy or question. The closer we come to the New Testament without swerving from its sense and spirit, the closer then shall we come to Christ in doctrinal fellowship and teaching. This is the one sublime rule of life common to us all. To walk with him in doctrine, to sit at his feet and learn of him, is the outcome and

crowning glory of that personal faith in him which saves, and which honors him as Saviour and Sovereign.

Following Where the New Testament Leads. Oneness in the experience of grace, with the New Testament as the common standard of authority in life, should easily open the way for oneness in Christian belief and practice. This would do much to symphonize the discordant note too often heard among the followers of our Lord. The oneness for which he prayed did not, we may be sure, contemplate a conglomerate creed, or a disregard for those things which he commanded, or the setting at naught the doctrines everywhere prevalent in his teachings. That oneness will come when it comes, in the brotherhood of believers and in the universals of Christian belief and practice as measured by the New Testament, in what it teaches as doctrine and requires as faith and obedience.

We must not fear nor hesitate to make appeal to the New Testament as the supreme standard, or to follow where it leads. This means to believe its doctrines and precepts, to speak its words as words of weight and authority, to have its spirit in personal experience, to live its life for Christ's will and way. We speak not of a dead book, or of a mere code of law, or "set of rules," but of that living word which in its contents is a powerful, spiritual dynamic for making things new, revolutionizing and transforming the heart, regulating and ruling the life. The New Testament, vitalizing in its great doctrine, stands for the kingdom of God among men, makes for righteousness and peace and

joy in the Holy Spirit, whether with one by himself or with many associated in the church.

It is the very genius of the Scripture in its doctrine and spirit, to make itself known in the character and life, through the preaching and teaching of all who come within its power and experience. The gospel in its very essence is diffusive like the fragrance of the flower, or the perfume of the alabaster box. The believer in Jesus as his Saviour has something to tell, and the word of his heart is but an echo of the Scripture word and thought. His language is the language of Zion. It may be told him in the secret of his soul, but he will publish it from the housetop. Its light cannot be hid, its voice cannot be hushed. Its message is an open message, its word is on the wing, to make Christ known, as to his teaching, his walk among men, his death to save from sin, and as to what he would have men do.

Christianity, the Church and Christendom. These are three masterful words in the world's vocabulary, and represent the mightest facts and factors in the world's history. They are not identical in thought, not coterminous in meaning, but they center in Christ separately and conjointly, and bear powerful testimony in his behalf. They have their fixed place in all art and science and literature, in all the movements of distinction and renown since he came. They are of the New Testament, the triumph and product of its principles. Their testimony is cumulative, and move with ever increasing power.

Had not Christ lived, there would be no Christian-

ity; had not Christ died to save the lost, there would be no church; had not Christ risen from the dead and led captivity captive, there would be no Christendom. History is history, and cannot be undone, nor can its meaning be changed. The fact of the cross with its doctrine is fixed in the calendar of God and man, as God's stupendous effort of love to save from sin. We need not argue for the sun, since the sun is shining, nor for Christ, since the sun of righteousness has risen with healings in his wings, and the nations of the earth are singing his praises.

The word church is used here as throughout these pages, to designate the church of Christ in its individual local character, multiplying itself through the centuries, and in its organic life bearing testimony to Christ throughout the world. It is an educational institution, restricted as to curriculum, but rich and powerful in educational products. In its very heart, and because of its doctrinal and spiritual forces, the church is dynamic as a propaganda of New Testament principles. This is the outflow and inflow of its life, its missionary spirit, principle and policy; to be unmissionary means its death. This is inherent and fundamental in the corporate life of the church, both as commanded by our Lord to teach the things which he commanded, and also from the mighty impulses of its new life and joy.

A New Testament Propaganda. Fundamental principles may not be put in didactic form or creedal statement, yet there must be didactic instruction. This is precisely what our Lord intended, when he spoke of

teaching the observance of his commandments. He was setting the schedule and program for coming ages, by means of which *his doctrines* were to live, win their way, and bless mankind. There must be propagation of New Testament principles, a teaching of Christ's doctrine with the New Testament as the commanding word. This is the call of the hour, and awaits the answer of the Sunday school world, and of the church in training and equiping its school as a center of doctrinal energy. Truth is mighty, and will prevail, but not if left to itself. It becomes mighty in the might of its champion.

Propagandism means *propagation*—the spreading abroad of the New Testament principles from person to person, to extend the knowledge of Christ, to circulate the truth concerning him and his kingdom, to carry the good news from place to place, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Great principles do not go abroad of themselves, though imperial and even momentous. Grain in the garner will never yield a harvest or make increase in the market. The message, even a message of the king and of pardon for the criminal on the scaffold, must wait for a messenger. So Christ with his great doctrines which must redeem the world and bring on his coronation, *waits for teachers* who will bear the good news of salvation, and teach the things which he has commanded. The Sunday school serving in this high mission, comes into a sphere all its own, and supplements all other schools, but with disparagement for none. Whatever is truly Christian is of the New Testament, and must agree

with its teaching; conversely, whatever is of the New Testament is Christian, whether persons or principles, whether church, character or creed, whether missions or ministries. The Sunday school has no rival among other schools, either in its purpose to teach the Scriptures, or its aim to save the lost, or its further and larger aim of character building and the better fitting of men and women for whatever may engage their attention and service. All centers in Christ, holds him supreme, with the New Testament as his word of authority and as our supreme standard in Christian belief and life.

Education in Christian Truth. This is more than propaganda of principles, as education is more than instruction. It is more than religious education as Christianity is more than religion. It means more than having schools and colleges under Christian influence, as they almost necessarily do not include this in their curriculum. Education is both process and product, the curriculum determines what sort it is. Not altogether perhaps, for the teacher himself in his own personality, will add a certain something in the process indefinable and powerful, and outside the course of study. Whatever is in the process, however, will reappear in the product, as surely as the wheat-grain reproduces the wheat-stalk. There can be no education in mechanics except through teaching mechanics, no education in the arts and sciences except through teaching the arts and sciences, and no education in Christian truth except through teaching Christian truth.

Christian education means on the teacher's part instruction in the New Testament, but on the pupil's part belief, absorption, assimilation in mind and heart. This makes Christian character, has Christ as its center and base, and crowns him Lord of the heart, with his word as authority in the conscience and life. It distinguishes Christian education from all other education, Christian character from the moral and even religious character, Christianity itself from all other religions. Cornelius was religious, but not Christian; Romans and Greeks had their religion, but not Christianity; they knew not God as he made himself known in Jesus Christ.

Supplementing whatever education may be given in other branches of learning, this service sets the church school apart from all other schools, with work radical and distinct, with equipment and endowment peculiar to itself, with purpose and subject all its own. The Sunday school has not yet reached the limit of its scope and power, as an educational force, and has scarcely entered on its career of didactic instruction. Already vital and powerful, its efficiency can be greatly augmented both as a method for saving the lost, as an instrument of Christian education, and as a means for sending forth the principles of the New Testament, as leaves from the tree of life in the Paradise of God.

The words, New Testament and Christian, as words with definite significance, are practically one in meaning—one naming the Scriptures concerning Christ, the other indicating the system of truth which has him for its center, and showing a life which has its source and

power in him, its expression in his service and in building his kingdom. New Testament doctrine, precepts, ordinances, service, these are all of the Christian system bearing its mark, purpose and spirit. So Christian education in its highest form is education in the things which the New Testament teaches, and comes to its richest fruitage in those who have experiential and saving knowledge of Christ as Saviour. Through teaching the doctrine of the cross, will come the final conquest of the cross.

An Example of Propaganda and Education Through Teaching. The Sunday school as a means of education in Christian truth, a propaganda of Scripture doctrine, has an illustrious example in the conduct of our Lord with his disciples following his resurrection. His ministry on earth was coming to a close with touches of resurrection life and power; his ministry in heaven was awaiting his ascension, while he went in and out with the little group as his class of choice ones. Their hearts no doubt often burned within them during those forty days, as the risen Christ talked with them and opened the Scriptures concerning himself. He was preparing them to evangelize and to teach—propagating his truth through them, projecting himself and his doctrine through them and through their teaching into centuries yet to come.

That was a great school through a succession of days, fit model and standard for the church school at the present time. We need not call it a Sunday school, and yet we will hardly go amiss if we do. The obligation to teach Scripture truth comes to the Sunday

school not from the day of its session, but because it is a *church school,* successor to that little group in teaching, in fulfillment of its mission to teach. It is the custodian having in trust the doctrines which were taught during those forty days—unequalled in the world's history by any other forty days of instruction. Their curriculum is our curriculum, their privilege ours, to pass on the great doctrines to those who shall come after.

As an occasion of instruction it was the Holy of holies, with the risen Christ as teacher. The disciples came out of that school new men with new equipment. They had learned of him, had new conceptions of Jesus, new doctrinal convictions and earnestness, and never in the coming years did they once forget that word, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." From that time on his death and resurrection had new charm and power, the Scriptures and his doctrines had new meaning, and were given free and powerful exposition such as the disciples had not known before. They could not do otherwise than speak the things which they had seen and heard.

In that school they were made ready for Pentecost, at least in the first preparation of gathering doctrinal material for the holy fire. Simon Peter, the unschooled fisherman from Galilee, came out of that school, educated in the mighty things of God, and second only to Paul as a preacher, with such enrichment in Scripture knowledge as augmented his own power and added to the glory of Pentecost. The glory of the first chapter of Acts is too often and too far lost

in the glory of the second chapter. But surely it has the word for today, and the Sunday school world needs its great lesson, needs to learn from that school of forty days what we shall teach, and what are the sources of power in the educational process.

THE UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN CREED. Is this a dream, this doctrinal oneness among Christians? Dare we write it down, or speak it out loud? Is it visionary, or a vision of the conquering power of Christ, of the final conquest of New Testament faith? Christianity may be viewed from different standpoints: (1) Simply a history holding its place in the history of the world; (2) a religion, calling men everywhere to worship at its altar; (3) a salvation through personal faith in Christ; (4) a new life wrought within and compelling a new life without; (5) a mission and ministry in saving the lost; (6) but also as a thing to be chiefly noticed here, it is a system of truth, principles or doctrines, as the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and submitted for belief as their creed and for instruction in their life.

There is no attempt here to enumerate these principles: they are everywhere manifest throughout the New Testament pages, though nowhere appearing in formal or creedal statement. They are of tremendous moment, and their propagation commands the earnest consideration of the followers of our Lord. In an earlier chapter of this volume an English writer was quoted as saying, that in the course of history God had often interposed by reformation, sometimes by revolution, to rescue and emphasize afresh four great prin-

ciples of the New Testament creed, viz: the supremacy of the Scriptures, the Lordship of Jesus, the empire of conscience, the sanctity of the single or local church. These several items of faith are fundamental, inhere in each other, and stand or fall together.

So important are they therefore, so momentous in themselves, so fundamental in the whole system of Christian truth, so essential also to the furtherance of the gospel and all the interests of Christ's kingdom, that they should have a commensurate place in our teaching. Evangelical Christians of every name might well concentrate their Sunday school teaching, focus their educational propaganda on these and their related truths in the Christian system. These are inscribed on the banner of the cross, and everywhere are the insignia of conquest for a pure and powerful New Testament faith and life.

Bringing the Question Nearer Home. But is a universal Christian creed possible? To answer either yes or no, is a daring few will venture. But why not? No one now sets bounds to the triumphs of science and invention, commerce and capital. Why not a universal Christian creed among the followers of our Lord, who know his saving grace—even oneness in creedal statement of their faith in him, with oneness of doctrinal belief concerning him, oneness in the faith delivered to the saints, with one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all?

If this ever comes, it will come through faithfulness in teaching and following New Testament principles. It will not come, cannot come, by sword, or might or

power; nor will it come by minifying doctrine and magnifying indifference about doctrine; nor by the surrender or compromise of things with which the church is entrusted and charged; it will not come at all in the absence of doctrinal earnestness in conviction and character. This the rather is the way of failure and defeat, this is not the way of Christ, nor of his commandments, and is far below his own doctrinal life, power and method of teaching.

A course like that moreover is far below all the standards he set for his people in precept and example, and deficient in all the elements of power and greatness, whether in the church or in the individual Christian character and life. Christ wants his people one, and prayed that they might be one even as he and his Father are one, that they might be in accord with each other in their loyalty to him, in teaching what he commanded, in keeping sacred and inviolate the truts committed to their charge. "Organic unity" is not so possible of making, nor nearly so powerful when made, as *doctrinal oneness*—one in Christ, one in belief concerning him, one in purpose to honor him in the heart, to make his word supreme authority in life, to advocate his will and walk in his ways among men.

The Final Triumph of His Doctrine. This is the highway of the King along which he will come when he comes, and is the hope of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus—that his kingdom shall cover the earth, that Christendom will become the synonym of Christ's reign in the hearts and lives of men, and throughout the nations of the earth. This is no vain

hope, that will come to naught, going out like the going down of the sun to rise no more forever, but rather a faith which shall surely come to the finish, is even now in process of fruitage with foretaste richer than the grapes which came from Eschol. The soul, confident and expectant, stands erect and glorifies God, enraptured by the vision of the final triumph.

We have not made due emphasis or recognition of what may be called the *universals in Christian belief and practice*—the mighty things held in common among all evangelical Christians. The final victory will come through the propaganda of these as New Testament principles, by the church in its mission of teaching and through the conquering power of doctrine—the doctrine of the risen Christ, who once was dead and is alive forever more with the keys of death and hell; the doctrine of his abiding presence with his word to teach what he commanded and with the Holy Spirit to guide in our teaching; the doctrine of the cross with the glorious doctrines of grace interwoven in and through it as warp and woof, in fulfillment of that royal word: "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me." The triumph at the end will be a doctrinal triumph, the conquest of teaching, the coronation of teachers in the presence of the King.

As the closing word and expressing the joyous anticipation of the coming years, we may recall a saying of our Lord. During his earthly ministry he always moved in the triumphant spirit and spoke the triumphant word. In the scene at the raising of Lazarus, Jesus stood before the grave where the dead man lay, and

spoke that word which commands all the ages. It was the word and bearing of conquest in the presence of difficulties and impossible things; it was a word with something of complaint and pathos in its tone and touch, and yet strong, confident, triumphant; the word which to this day he passes out from the throne to his people everywhere: "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?"

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